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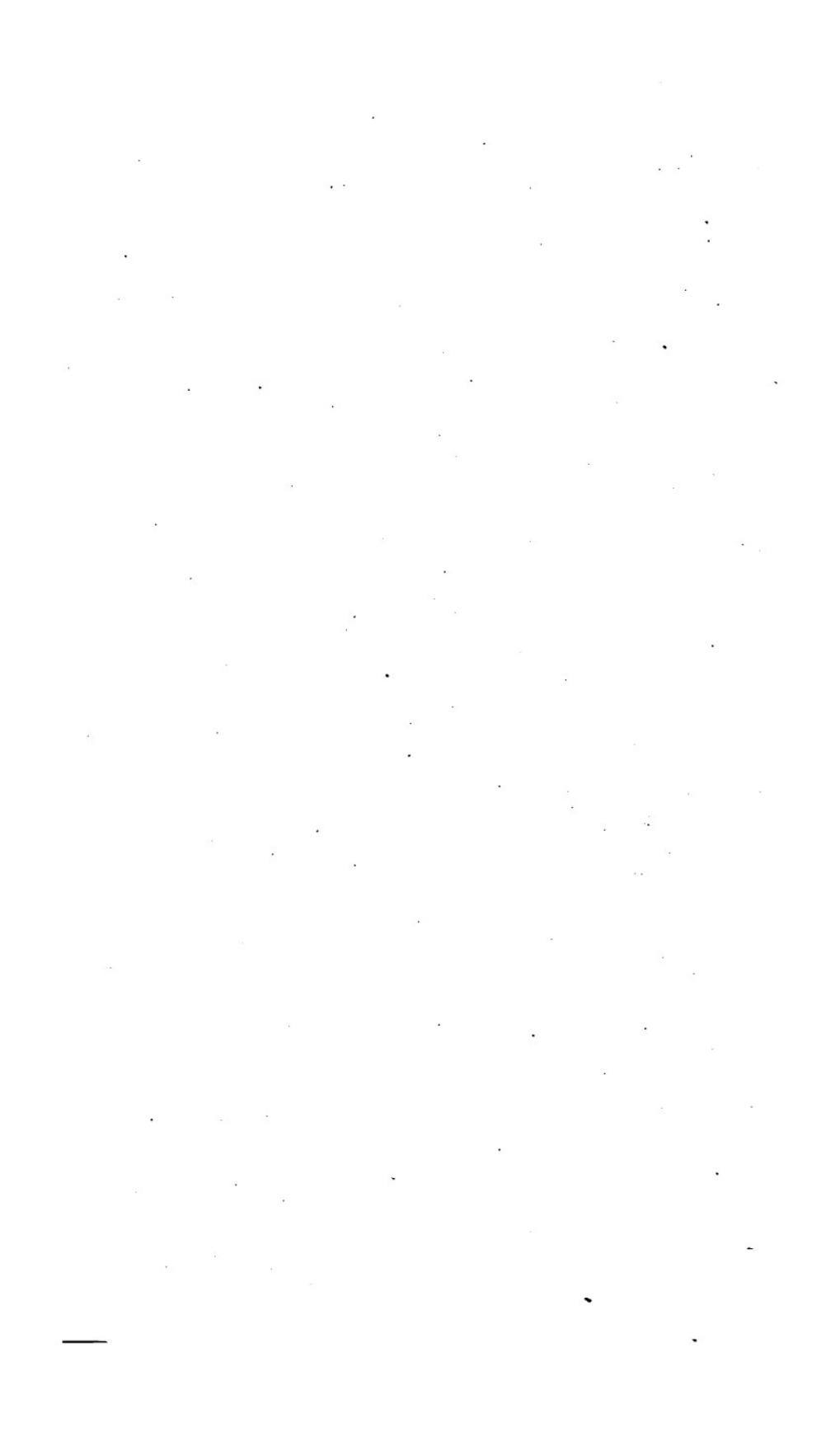


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Wall







# **ORANGE GROVE.**



# ORANGE GROVE:

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## TALE OF THE CONNECTICUT.

*"I SLEPT, and dreamed that life was Beauty ;  
I WOKE, and found that life was Duty.  
Was thy dream then a shadowy lie ?  
Toil on, sad heart, courageously,  
And thou shalt find thy dream to be  
A noonday light and truth to thee."*

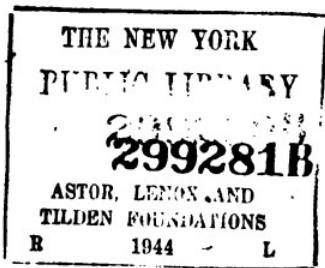
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# A Tale of the Connecticut.

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## CHAPTER I.

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"And 'mid fair hills where cultivation smiles,  
The Connecticut, white with sunlit sails,  
Flows down and up with his unwearying tides."

Flow on gently, noble river, as thou hast done from the beginning, ever faithful keeper of the secrets entrusted to thy bosom! What tales could'st thou not tell us of human joy and human sorrow; of want, wretchedness and wo; of tragedies that would chill the heart's warm life-blood at its source; and thank God for the blessed gift, thou could'st tell us also of human love, pure, deep, fervent as that ushered in on the first Christmas morn.

Beside thy still waters have lived and died earth's nameless heroes, saints and sages, pure and humble spirits that have won victories grander than were ever achieved on battle-field; from thy verdant banks the unlettered savage and the civilized Puritan have raised their daily orisons to God; and here also have wrestled in deadly conflict the vengeful ire of the Anglo-Saxon and the vengeful ire of the hunted Indian, as the native child of the forest vainly strove

to defend his ancient home from the grasp of his remorseless, but victorious foe.

But it is not of scenes like these we ask thy records now,—no thrilling tale of heroic deeds, startling adventure or disappointed love. It is the simple record of the human soul in common life, affected by no extraordinary incidents save such as fall to the lot of all.

Now that the age of Puritan bigotry has passed, one may breathe freely while treading the field of romance. Reverently let us judge those stern virtues whence superstition sprung as the natural reaction of the spiritual despotism that sent from the church the children of her own faith, to seek in austerity an antidote to the universal corruption from which they had fled. Shocked by the heartlessness of the forms they had been taught to regard as worship, and still more by the hypocrisy that enthroned itself in church and state as the supreme Head to which all must swear allegiance, they looked upon life as one sublime but awful reality, presenting no middle ground, aiming at one sole, absolute purpose, to escape the terrors of hell by obtaining the blessedness of heaven. For this should prayer and praise be raised, the ritual observed, and good works performed.

Whatever pertained to the pleasures of this life, aside from that one ultimate object, was considered too trivial, if not too sinful, to engage the attention of immortal beings, with such a momentous future before them. What were our earthly sufferings, either physical or mental, magnified to the extent of

our imagination, compared to the miseries which one lost soul must endure through ages and ages of eternity, beyond what the imagination can conceive? The rigor with which they sought to enforce this idea fostered the very evils they sought to eradicate.

By separating the æsthetic from the moral and religious, by cultivating one faculty at the expense of another, and setting up their own standard as the infallible test for all, they ranged bigotry and superstition on the one side,—unrestrained vulgarity and licentiousness on the other. In banishing from their houses all fictitious works in order to avoid contamination with what was low and sensual in them, they could not banish imagination nor repress the magnetism of human nature, which would find expression through such sources as the public patronage permitted. If denied access to the pure and virtuous, it would cater to the prejudices of the thoughtless and profane.

One of the greatest instrumentalities of moral and religious instruction exists under the name of fiction. Its office consists in bringing us to a more intimate acquaintance with human nature, not so much to philosophize upon it as to present it as it is, leaving the reader to draw his own inferences. It reveals the secret springs of human action, upon which, more than upon public deeds and military prowess hangs the fate of nations. By appealing directly to the feelings, the heart is touched when the intellect would never be reached by logic. A truth is often unconsciously imbibed under the gorgeous coloring of the imagination, when it would find

no response if presented from the simple stand-point of right and duty. Jesus recognized this principle when he imparted his great lessons in the form of parables, to which the common people listened gladly.

The human soul is merely a repetition of itself in different combinations, under different circumstances. The child of to-day must pass through the same mental, moral and physical discipline to learn the use of his muscles, subdue his passions and train his intellect,—is guided by the same instinct to distinguish right from wrong, as in the days when Cain slew his brother, and sought to conceal his guilt by attempting to deceive his Maker.

In one sense there is no such thing as fiction. Every invention of the imagination has its prototype. Every recorded thought and act has come within the range of some one's experience. There is but one original Architect.

Could we read the inner life of the humblest individual, and compute the results by supplying the many little *ifs* which are not all the mere play of the imagination, we should have the material for a more wonderful romance than was ever published. Not alone in the dazzling theater of the world, nor in those individual convulsions that rouse every passion and set in motion every latent power of the soul, but in solitude and seclusion can we trace from phases of our own experience, how a word lightly spoken may stir the depths of a nature usually placid as the gentle summer breeze, so deeply as to reveal those stormy passions that agitate and upheave the founda-

tions of society. The world is full of romance and our lives are full of plots. We naturally shrink from exposing to the cold criticism of the public, those hidden influences and inward experiences that contribute most powerfully to the formation of character, the benefit of which may be imparted under the combined imagery of fact and fancy.

## **CHAPTER II.**

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“Oh! if the soul immortal be,  
Is not its love immortal too?”

Partially sheltered from observation, in a recess in one of the most elegant and luxuriously furnished apartments a New England city could boast, recently enriched by some of the highest productions of literature and art that a refined taste cultured by a few years residence in Europe could select, sat a gentleman and lady engaged in earnest conversation. A brilliant assemblage had gathered there, wealth and beauty dazzled the eye with their gorgeous splendor, and uninterrupted festivity ruled the hour. These two guests heeded not the airy forms flitting by, the voluptuous swell of the music, or the fascinating mazes of the dance. Subjects of graver and deeper importance, and of surpassing interest to them engrossed their thoughts.

It was a time when theological strife ran at its greatest height, and every man, woman and child enlisted as combatants. So perverted and distorted had become every opinion upon the subject that the individual who stood outside the conflict, in closer communion with nature's teachings than with the scholastic essays of the divines, might have been welcomed, if not as a harbinger of salvation, at least as

a panacea that would help to allay the fierce contention.

Society was composed then, as now, of every grade and shade of opinion,—from the outspoken tenets of Calvinism to the milder and more poetic sway of that unconscious religious fervor, which captivates and moulds by the consistency of its own life rather than by the profession of creeds. Men there were whose austerity in morals shut out every ray of social warmth; women whose more secluded lives led to greater concentration of thought and purpose, but whose greater depth of feeling counteracted the stoicism of the philosopher, and led them to crucify their affections upon the alter of a life-long martyrdom. -

There were others whose dogmas were laid on the shelf for particular occasions, from whom unconsciously flowed that spirit of charity and tolerance which saw in every man a friend and brother, ready to recognize him as a co-worker in any noble cause that had for its aim the elevation of humanity. Sometimes maternal fondness overpowered every other emotion, and the joyous laugh and festive dance assumed quite another character when mothers saw their own children among the merry participants. But oftener, under the overshadowing wings of a Puritan ancestry all the tender amenities of life were hidden beneath the rigid crust of doctrine and belief whence, only occasionally, they flowered out like some rare, exotic plant, the richer for its culture.

To such influences, doubtless, is mainly owing the strength of New England character. While other

nations, corrupted by a profligate ancestry, or prostituted by their own inherent vices have been wrecked on the shoals of national decay, the spirit of Plymouth Rock, misguided, but conscientious, will outlive the errors of a few generations, and land us safely in the haven of universal toleration without regard to clime, color, sex or condition, recognizing only the brotherhood of the human race.

Alfred Claremont and Marianne Beaufort might have been called the representatives of the two antipodes of theology and religion. She was emphatically a child of nature. Her parents died when she was very young, leaving her to the care of a maiden sister of her father, who, if she did not enter so readily as some into the sports of children, or understand so well the thousand little wants of their minds, certainly possessed one eminent quality, that of caring for their physical education.

She allowed her free exercise in the open air, and never interfered with her own choice of enjoyment. There was not a hill or valley, wood or stream, for miles around that she had not explored. Possessing a healthy, happy temperament, and a contemplative mind, she grew and expanded into luxurious bloom under the joyous, cloudless sky of nature, through which she looked up to God as a tender, loving Father, who had made this earth so rich in beauty and so lavish in its gifts to man.

Her spiritual organization was such that it was safer to trust her to her own instincts than to attempt to control it, and she had never met with those conflicting influences that sometimes warp and harm

a child's nature more than positive neglect would do. Having no young companions at home she was perhaps more reserved and thoughtful than she would otherwise have been, but this circumstance did not cast a shadow over her happiness, which she diffused wherever she moved by the magic influence of her presence, the radiance of her inner self.

During one of those lingering twilights that grace the early autumn she had retreated to a favorite grove, where, under the blue canopy of heaven, earth, air and the deep blue river blended in one sweet accord, to swell the rapturous emotion of her own soul and breathe their soothing influences over another, whose stern mental conflicts had of late dimmed for him the brightness of the material as well as the spiritual world. Unconscious of each other's presence, although but a few rods apart, until they accidentally exchanged glances as both turned to leave, the momentary impression made upon him was not exactly that of a Puritan maiden, for she was not rigid enough in thought and feeling for that, but of one whose purity of thought and feeling shone through every feature so strikingly as to arrest his attention. Her image remained vivid in his mind, not from any expectation of seeing her again, but for its association with his own peaceful feelings that evening, which contrasted so happily with his previous hours of skepticism and despair. No romance had ever tortured him with its idle dreams, for life had been too stern a reality.

He was an Englishman by birth, the youngest son of a wealthy merchant, and had been attracted to

our shores partly from a love of novelty, but more from sympathy with our democratic institutions. His attention was first arrested by a consideration of the laws of primogeniture which seemed to him so absolutely absurd and unjust, that in seeking to trace their origin for some show of reason upon which they could rest, he was led to a general review of all governments, both human and divine, which could end only with a reconstruction of his former views and opinions. Educated into the most rigid tenets of the church of England, which he repudiated as his mind expanded, he was now passing through that dark period when the soul, relinquishing the dead letter which it has been taught to regard as the life-giving source of religious inspiration, is loosed from its moorings, and drifts about on the fathomless ocean of its own conjectures and reasonings ere it reaches in safety the other shore.

The spiritual element must be felt, it cannot be demonstrated. Vain is the most glowing rhetoric to him whose intuitions have not unlocked those sublime realities of the unseen world which the human intellect alone can never grasp or unfold. An influence more subtle than mere words can diffuse conveys the higher knowledge of the soul, which she selects according to the laws of affinity, making the meat for one poison for another, from the inability of the one to comprehend the language of the other.

In rejecting a rigid code of belief there is often a tendency to materialism and skepticism. Reason is a safe guide when it has a stand-point; otherwise it is like a ship without a rudder. When a doctrine

has been enforced upon it as an essential article of religious faith which it could never reconcile with itself, it begins to question whether there is any such principle as religious faith, and what its value to the soul when it involves such absurdities. Its proper function is to search out and eradicate those errors of opinion that conflict with the spiritual perceptions, by which we recognize certain truths independent of the intellect, but harmonizing with it, being the highest development of the innate consciousness we call faith, which is the natural endowment of every living soul. It is manifest in the child when he runs to his mother for protection before he has learned to lisp her name ; in man, in the confidence with which he looks forward to the fulfilment of every relation of the material universe towards him as a dependent on its bounty. In its highest manifestation forming the basis of the religious sentiments, it is no more to be confounded with belief than theology with religion. One pertains to the intellect and is as diversified as the human mind, the other is the divine illumination by which alone we ascend to a knowledge of things divine, and feel the glow of the ineffable love that gilds life's saddest hours with a foretaste of the blessedness of immortality. Belief is the mental result of the effort to reduce it to a system, and varies with the progressive stages of civilization. It can no more change its essential nature than the different modes of training a child can affect the nature of parental love.

“ Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.”

When skepticism ran highest in the mind of Alfred Claremont, came one of those inward revelations, one of those floods of light with which the darkest moments of human wisdom are sometimes made luminous with a halo of celestial inspiration.

The loveliness of this autumn sunset sent its ray of light and cheer to herald the dawn of morning twilight upon his dreary night of doubt and uncertainty. He drank in its beauty and felt its inspiration. An impression made at such times is as ineffaceable from the memory as it is grand and elevating in character. Years of sorrow and suffering may succeed, but the recollection of it will spring up like an oasis in the desert to revive and strengthen the fainting hopes of the weary traveller as he takes up the burden of life, it may be, forever alone.

And if over all we feel the sympathy of a kindred spirit, what matter if the lips be silent? Do we not feel the responsive echoes of the eternal harmony of nature, as soul speaks to soul in a language no tongue can express; and the law of affinity running through all human intelligences which makes the eye the heart's best interpreter and most eloquent logician? The consciousness of this fact ought to make the humblest and most barren life rejoice that it has this power to confer happiness which no outward circumstance can take away; sometimes proving more precious to the friendless one than gifts or gold, because freighted with the richer sympathy of the human heart.

Not many months afterwards both these individuals met at the house of a mutual friend, who, on his

return from Europe had prepared an entertainment for the reception of his numerous acquaintances, which rivalled in splendor any previous event of the kind in that city. At a table which literally bloomed with the rarest and most beautiful flowers it was possible to obtain in mid-winter, a casual remark attracted Mr. Claremont's attention ; which immediately revealed to him his unknown companion in the grove. The recognition was mutual, needing not the formality of an introduction, and thus commenced a friendship of equal benefit to both parties. It was a fortunate thing for him at this time to come in contact with a person resting so calmly in the bosom of God's love as did Marianne Beaufort. She needed not to be told that God is,—she felt his presence in every breeze that fanned her brow, in the murmur of the forest, in the sparkling rivulet at her feet. It was the all pervading element of her nature, the focus in which concentrated every other emotion, whether in solitude, or surrounded by the votaries of the world.

If she could not always meet his arguments, her faith and trust were never for a moment shaken, and the confiding assurance with which she looked forward to the solution of all his problems forced him to acknowledge the supremacy of that instinct which trusts before it can understand, over all the deductions of logic.

This was just what he needed. The fervent, longing aspiration of his soul could not be met by argument. He had had enough of that. The religious sentiment was strong within him, and required

only to be allowed to follow its own dictates in rising to the highest standard of which he was capable, instead of being forced into a given channel.

A student of human nature might have been interested in the physiognomy of the two. In connection with a well developed physical organization, though of rather irregular features, which, however, did not detract from the general air of refinement he inspired, he had a high, full forehead, eyes so varying in their expression as to reveal every emotion of his soul, a firm set mouth indicating decision of character, about which there played a tender smile, not the evanescent passion of the moment, but habitual,—the index of a highly sensitive nature.

She had a finely moulded, graceful form, symmetrical features, large, lustrous hazel eyes, full of meaning and earnestness; long, silken eyelashes, and eyebrows of the same shade, as delicately curved as if drawn by a pencil; soft brown hair that shaded a well developed brow; an exquisitely formed mouth which, when at rest, bore the faintest image of a smile as if giving utterance to her own happy thoughts.

Though beautiful she was not brilliant. Possessing a mind of uncommon cultivation, she made no display of it for the admiration of others. To be admired she must be drawn out, not by a mere casual observation, but by some real, earnest thought striking the chord of sympathy within, when it would vibrate to the slightest touch. Mr. Claremont was fortunate enough to touch this chord and it responded.

Fortunately or unfortunately, an acquaintance of this kind, a friendship founded on the most serious and disinterested principles it may be, very often gives rise to emotions of quite another nature from those which were at first of engrossing interest.

Many a reverend divine, shaking his head over the romantic follies of his young parishioners whence he draws his text for a Sunday sermon upon the bad tendencies of novel reading, finds himself the unconscious hero of some unwritten tale, trenching somewhat on the sanctity of his profession. When we can banish love from the world, it will be possible to write a story for the faithful delineation of human nature which shall leave out this interlacing of the emotions.

On a bright May morning the following spring, Marianne returned from her accustomed walk with a basket full of her favorite flower, that modest spring beauty, the trailing arbutus. Having arranged it for her table in the loose, careless manner she liked best to see it, she collected the finest, largest specimens which she had reserved, in a bouquet. The morning passed away before it was completed, and one might perceive by the unusual care manifested in its arrangement that something more than fancy was nerving her fingers to the task.

First she gave it a cone-shaped appearance, but that looked too stiff, and they were all speedily separated and arranged in an umbel form, which struck her as being as far the other way, and it is uncertain how many more attempts she would have made had not the door bell rung just as she had completed it.

for the third time, ushering in the intended recipient of her gift. Her time and care were lost, for either would have been equally acceptable to him.

There was such a child-like simplicity in her manner as she glided across the room, such a sparkling animation in her countenance as she asked him to accept the bouquet, that ere he was aware, he gave expression to the thought that rose instinctively and unpremeditatedly to his lips, saying, "No, unless I can have the hand that holds it."

Love's golden hours flew quickly by, and the next May day witnessed the consummation of their plighted vows. Ere three summers passed away, a fairer Rose than ever graced their favorite bower bloomed in their household, and the months glided peacefully on, as day by day added new charms to their treasure, and blessed them with the precious influences of childhood.

## **CHAPTER III.**

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“Child of Genius! in thine eyes,  
I can see thy soul arise;  
All the poetry of feeling,  
In their changeful depths revealing.”

The first-born! who can define the world of sensations and emotions that spring into existence at that magic word. Like every other deep impulse of the soul, language is powerless to express it, imagination in its loftiest range comes far short of reality. Others may come to share an equal love,—none to excite the same novelty of emotion. The numerous little arts and feats of wisdom common to all children then force themselves on the observation of the parents for the first time. And though those little hands may be motionless in death, and those little lips never more rejoice their ears with their sweet music, that inanimate form has bequeathed an immortal legacy from Heaven,—a new link in the golden chain of the affections.

Rosalind, perhaps, was not a child of remarkable talent in any given direction, but she was certainly an original child. She neither resembled other children, nor imitated herself. She was constantly unfolding some new trait of character, and presenting herself in a new aspect. She inherited her father’s physical activity and perseverance, and com-

bined his logical with her mother's contemplative powers. Every thing that came under her observation was subjected to the strictest scrutiny for its why and wherefore. Never weary in her restless activity, she was constantly puzzling that little brain with questions oftentimes beyond the comprehension of much older heads. She combined the dignity of the woman with the artlessness of the child.Appealed to through the reason and the affections, she was gentle and yielding as a snow-flake; approached with a command, or a request that did not suggest its own reason, she was firm and unbending as the oak.

For her father she always manifested a most uncommon affection, reluctantly submitting to any other control, and never was a person better fitted for such a trust than he. He had early perceived her peculiar traits, and the immense importance resting on her early culture for her future happiness and usefulness. She must have a sphere for her activity, or she would grow up a fretful, impatient, discontented woman. She must be guided by a gentle, yet firm and steady hand, to bring into harmony the opposing tendencies of her character, or they might neutralize the good she would otherwise accomplish. It was a delightful task to him to study out her original propensities, and observe the latent germs of future promise whose development might some day require his most careful attention. He often felt that he was instructed as well as amused by the unaffected simplicity she displayed in the perception and correction of her own faults. The mission of children is ever a holy one, though the

cares and trials devolving on the parents, blind them frequently to the beautiful naivete with which their unperverted instincts dive at the essence of things, without going the circuitous route which prejudice and the force of habit constrain them to travel, to arrive at the same conclusions.

Great patience and discrimination are required to ascertain how far children shall be indulged in their natural inclinations, in order to develop a healthy, well-balanced character; and when they shall be restrained, that their will may not get the ascendancy instead of being the servant of their moral nature.

Mr. Claremont quite thoroughly understood this principle, as well from experience as from observation. He could perceive the difference in the effectual security of obedience between a peremptory command and decision, not necessarily implying a command.

When Rosalind was four years old she was presented with a miniature steamboat which had attracted her attention. It was not a common toy, but made of wood, in external appearance the fac simile of a boat capable of being set in motion. The gentleman to whom it belonged was so pleased at her curiosity to examine it that he gave it to her, although constructed by his son when a little boy, to gratify his passion for mechanical art and invention. One day she insisted on seeing it sail. After several vain attempts to convince her that it was impossible, her mother provided her a place to try the experiment. Filled with vexation at seeing it remain stationary in the water instead of gliding gracefully on its surface,

in a fit of impatience she struck her mother who was standing by. Just then her father entered. Though neither of them said a word, her manner at once indicated that she knew she had forfeited his accustomed kiss. After dinner, instead of returning to her playthings as usual when her father left, she sat with her hands quietly resting in her lap for almost the first time in her life, or stood gazing thoughtfully out at the window. She was evidently in a dilemma, and was exerting all the powers of her mind to extricate herself from it. Love was the very centre of her existence, and especially she could not live without her father's kiss. As the hour drew near for his return she went up softly to her mother, and said in a low voice, "Mother, I want to kiss you."

After receiving the proffered kiss, observing that she still stood with her large, wondering blue eyes fixed upon her, she said, "What is it, Rosa, what do you want to say?"

Leaning her head a little on one side, still looking wistfully at her, she answered, "I wish you would say it, mother, I can't."

"Say what, Rosa, that you are sorry you struck me?"

"Yes, yes, mother, that's it," and, evidently with a feeling of great relief she ran to the window to watch for her father. When she saw him coming, instead of running to meet him she retreated to the sofa, which was her place of refuge in every emergency.

Seeing that she showed no disposition to come forward as he entered the room and that he did not

notice her ; her mother, who had attentively observed her actions all the afternoon, said to him, " I think Rosa is waiting for a kiss from her father."

As he approached she did not move or speak, but fixed upon him an arch, inquisitive expression as if sure of reading in his countenance a confirmation of her own consciousness of having solved a great problem.

When he asked her what she had done with her boat, she drew herself up with the air of one whose sense of dignity has been offended, and said,

" Father you will please not to say anything more about it."

" Why," said he, " I want to explain it to you, so you will see what was the reason it would not sail as you expected. Now will you get it and let us examine it ? "

" No, it is where I cannot get it," speaking with as much decision as if she had been the parent, and he the child, " and so we may as well drop the subject, it isn't pleasant."

" I think it is. I should take a great deal of pleasure in showing my little daughter how it differs from a real steamboat, and I think she will be far happier to receive it back to her favor as we have received her to ours."

With a suppressed smile and much more of humility in her tone, she replied,

" I will show you where it is, if you will get it for me."

Under the attic stairs was a large, dark closet, the general receptacle of such miscellaneous articles as

collect in every household, where, behind barrels and boxes the offending boat was found. They were soon both engaged with so much enthusiasm as to remind one of some important interest like the shipping of a valuable cargo rather than the mere amusement of a child. Perhaps it was more important, for who can calculate the result of the slightest impression made on the susceptible mind of the child?

Rosalind's happiness was very much augmented when Walter, her little brother, three years younger than herself, grew old enough to share her sports, and receive her instruction. She was never satisfied with doing a thing for its own sake. She must have an object, a purpose. To impart to him the knowledge she gained, furnished a double motive for acquiring it.

Her strong will sought a mastery over the foibles of the child's intellect, in her eager desire for the attainments belonging to years and experience, and she could not patiently submit to the law of growth and development; but her affections, trusting the love she knew was seeking her best welfare, prompted her to unquestioned obedience, and she tried to reconcile the two. She would have had less reverence for her father if he had been less exacting, or lowered the standard to which he proposed to bring her.

Engaged in one of her puzzling explorations in her father's presence, when Walter was scarcely old enough to talk, she tried in vain to enlist his sympathy, and then vented her vexation upon him by reproaching him for his stupidity.

Mr. Claremont bade her leave the room till she

could treat him properly. Looking up to see if there was no alternative, she ran out in great haste closing the door not very gently. The next moment she opened it just far enough to put her head through, and said pertly, "Father, I don't love you." About half an hour after she entered with a soft, light step, and intruding her curly head before the paper he was reading, looked in his face with great affection, saying, "Oh, father, I do love you," and put her arms around his neck for the pardoning kiss.

She looked for reproof oftentimes when she did not get it, and was very jealous of any given to Walter. It required the nicest discrimination to know when to observe, and when to pass by those many faults, which, noticed too often, would have discouraged her efforts to overcome them; and without sufficient and judicious restraint would have produced a capricious but self-willed character. Doubtless many were suffered to go unrebuked, that would have been deemed worthy of censure in Walter. She knew it.

Hearing her father reprove him once for something comparatively trivial, she looked up from the kitten she was arraying in a wreath of clover blossoms, saying, "Why father, I have done worse than that a great many times, and you didn't say anything to me for it."

He was always firm in exacting her obedience to what she knew to be his wish; but it was through love, not fear, he gained her submission. Once he counteracted his decision, which, she frequently said in after life, made one of the greatest impressions

ever received,—it was so unexpected. She was in the habit of throwing her playthings at random when any thing puzzled or vexed her. It grieved her as much as it did her parents, but when a fit of vexation came over her it was done quick as thought.

She had a beautiful, large wax doll which she handled with the greatest care. One day in her absence, a child who was visiting there got hold of it and disfigured it sadly, besides tearing its delicate garments in shreds.

The sight of it in this plight, being the first intimation she had of the misfortune that had befallen it, was too much for her. Having a pair of scissors in her hand, she threw them with all the force she could exert across the room where Walter happened to be. Fortunately he escaped with no injury but a slight graze upon the cheek. She rushed into her father's arms and burst into tears, a thing unusual for her. "Oh, Rosa," said he; "I cannot let you go to ride with us to night."

This was a great privation, for there was nothing she enjoyed more than their summer evening drives, but she bore it bravely until she saw him leaving the house, when she burst out crying again, and said, "Oh father, won't you kiss me before you go? I want to kiss you." As he returned she threw her arms so lovingly around his neck that he was overcome, and recollecting that mercy was coeval with justice, he told her to get ready and she might go. She looked at him with astonishment, then with joy sparkling through the tears in her eyes, soon joined

them. Her little hands were ever tractable after that.

It was her peculiar characteristic to avoid every thing of unpleasant associations. The doll was entirely neglected, and sadly as she missed it she never spoke of her loss. A poor child once enlisted her sympathies so much that she begged the privilege to give it to her, but upon going to get it, the thought of parting with it forever revived her old attachment, and she replaced it affectionately, telling her mother that it would seem very hard to her if she should want to give her away because something had happened to spoil her looks.

After her father had tested her for six months, he brought her home a new doll, quite equal to the other, which she received very graciously, and after regarding it attentively for some minutes, said, with a look of serious concern;

"Don't you think the other Dolly would feel bad if she thought I loved this one best?"

New trials awaited her. Every new experience revived the old strife between the conflicting elements of her organization, and she had the battle to fight over again. It had been comparatively easy to yield when there was no opposing influence beyond herself. School brought its temptations. Being controlled more through her intellect and affections than by her moral sentiments she was far more the subject of surrounding influences than Walter. Passing from the constant supervision of her parents to the companionship of those who had not been so carefully guarded at home, she grew impatient of restraint,

and her father saw with grief that he was losing something of the hold through which he had gained her obedience without asserting his authority.

Near the school she attended lived a very eccentric widow who seemed to have sworn eternal enmity to all children. She would not allow them to set foot on her premises, running out with a broom to drive them off, like a brood of chickens, if she saw them coming in the direction of her domain. This course frequently incited them to little acts of depredation which otherwise they would not have thought of. They lost no opportunity to annoy her, pelting her door with stones which were hurled back at the shortest notice; and the contest generally ended by her going after a policeman, but as she always told them of her intention, they were sure to be missing when he arrived.

Rosalind and her companions never joined this rude set, but they would sit on the steps leading to her house, and if she failed to make her appearance soon began to sing, which brought her out with a vengeance, her gray hairs flying, as she never wore a cap, and her dress not by any means a la mode, so she presented a very unique appearance. Withal, the multiform wrinkles into which she contracted her face when uttering her threats completed the picture,—threats they knew to be perfectly harmless, for she was never known to harm a single living creature, not even to defend the privacy of her grounds. The stones thrown were never intended to hit those aimed at. To the adventurous nature of children this was great sport, but very exceptionable in

the view of Mr. Claremont. He remonstrated with Rosalind and tried to persuade her not to go there, but his reasons were unsatisfactory. There was no intention of mischief, and it could not hurt her in any possible way to sit on her steps, and she was sure that, living such a lonely life, she ought to be very grateful to them for singing her a song occasionally. If it made her cross, it was her fault, not theirs. Thus she argued.

Her father was not a man to be trifled with. He forbade her going, which at first overawed her, but when she joined her companions, who, as soon as school was over urged her to go with them again, she held a council in her own mind, and decided that it was very arbitrary in him to deprive her of enjoyments which were not denied to others, and she accompanied them, not, however, with a very keen sense of pleasure.

At dinner, in answer to her father's inquiry if she had obeyed him, she replied, no, but she had not done any thing wrong or out of the way, she thought, and was very sorry he should think otherwise, but she could not help it. That little will had gained ascendancy much faster than he thought, but he did not forget that he had been a child, or that grown people are as unwilling to submit to what seems to them, oftentimes, the arbitrary demands of their Heavenly Father, and he maintained his self-control.

With a child's quick instinct she perccived the sacrifice of feeling it cost him to enforce her obedience, which was another proof of his tender love,—a love that could suffer as well as enjoy,—and her

affection for him was thereby increased. Neither did she ever after manifest so much impatience when any thing baffled her comprehension.

The summer she was fifteen she passed under her father's tuition, which was a source of great enjoyment to both. Her eager desire to fathom every branch of science to which her investigating mind led her, was often the cause of great annoyance to her teachers, for they could not see why a girl need to ask so many questions, who would never have any use for her knowledge. She felt the injustice of the censures sometimes incurred by her inquisitiveness, and could scarcely brook with good grace the partiality that tolerated, seemingly with greater patience, the insensible questions of the most stupid boys. She did not understand the customs of society, far more prevalent then than now, assigning to manhood a career,—to womanhood, marriage or a blank.

Whatever Mr. Claremont's views in this respect, he intended to gratify and assist Rosalind in prosecuting her studies to the extent of his power. Though engaged in a large mercantile establishment, his financial ability and prompt business habits relieved him from many of the cares and perplexities attending men of his class, so that he had more leisure to spend at home and devote to her than usual with business men. He was one of the small company of successful merchants who had a conscience that could not be wrapped up in his Sunday suit, and a religion that he carried into his counting room, practising good will to men on six days out of the seven, thus saving his soul from the all-engrossing vexations

and anxieties of trade without detriment to his worldly interests, and redeeming it from the necessity of doubting the old maxim, that honesty is ultimately the best policy under all circumstances. With him the acquisition of wealth was only a secondary consideration, honorable as the means to an end, but not the end itself.

It is enough to make one shudder, who steps for the first time out of the blissful ignorance of private life into the great maelstrom of intrigue and duplicity, swallowing up the world at large. Specious promises and reckless investments on the longest credit constitute the badge of trade; punctuality in the payment of debts as a moral duty passes at a discount, and the industrious mechanic, dependent on his daily labor, deprived of the comforts of life through the negligence or dishonesty of his employer, considers society at best only a combination of rogues, and gives up in despair or resolves to try his own fortune by playing a game at the same table.

Astronomy being Rosalind's favorite science, was a subject which called forth most the brilliancy of her intellect. The wonders there unfolded were adapted to her ardent thirst for novelty and grandeur, and sufficient to engage the intense activity of her brain. She was fascinating to observe, when, on a keen frosty night, she came in with her father after they had been out to trace the constellations, her eyes beaming with delight and her cheeks glowing with the rosy hues of health, a good model for a picture of youth and happiness.

She never possessed the quiet beauty of her mother; hers was rather the expression of soul. When a great thought animated her, or some stirring emotion communicated its subtle enthusiasm to her features, there was an irresistible charm that insensibly attracted all who came within reach of her influence. Her chief feature of physical beauty was her flaxen ringlets, yet her complexion was fair, and her eyes resembled her father's in expression. In no other particular was there any resemblance between herself and any other member of the family. The same might also be said of her character, which was two-fold, but not deceptive. Exhibiting neither boldness or reserve, nature came forth in full measure, sometimes rushing on like some wild mountain stream, then like the calm summer ripple, gently and soothingly breathing its sweet message of rest and peace, as it was reflected from its own quiet bosom. Such an organization is born to suffering from its want of harmony, but when this is once effected, there is a strength of character seldom displayed by a person of an even temperament naturally.

Walter was an exception to this rule. Combining a healthy physical frame with a well balanced mental organization, he presented an example of a highly moral, deeply religious nature without those sharp angles which chequer the lives of most people with their alternate sunshine and shade, as they bear witness to the decisive conflicts and victories through which they have triumphed.

The following incident furnishes a good illustra-

tion of his character. His teacher having occasion to leave the schoolroom for a short time, appointed him monitor in his absence, considering him the most trust-worthy scholar he had. It was an unenviable position, and one which conflicted with Walter's sense of honor to report the conduct of his fellows. One of the boys who had too much of the fun-loving disposition to let such an occasion go unimproved, and too much artfulness to allow himself to be caught in the trap he set for others, winked to his nearest companion who took the hint and jogged the elbow of a boy sitting before him writing. Never passing by an affront without showing proper resentment, the latter rose hastily to grasp the offender, and upset the inkstand over his clean copy-book which landed in a little girl's lap in front of him, who began to cry at the dismal picture her new pink apron presented with its long streaks of jet, like so many black marks against its fair fame. There was a general titter throughout the room as all sprung instantly to their feet to see what was happening. Just then the school-master entered,—poor, mortal being,—with the dignity becoming such a functionary, who cast some menacing frowns on the little miscreants in the quarter whence had originated this confusion, thus flinging an imputation at his boasted renown for securing good order and obedience, and also setting a snare which cost him a still greater loss to his reputation,—the equilibrium of his temper. Addressing Walter, whose close proximity to the scene of action forced him to be an eye witness of the whole, but who alone remained unmoved, having neither smiled

nor spoken, he demanded a full account of the occurrence, with the names of the offenders; to which he replied that he had nothing to say, and positively declined to give any information.

" You have nothing to say ? and yet you know all about it, who and what have been the cause of this mischief, but refuse to tell me," giving him a look that Walter, brave as he was, trembled to encounter, —an angry, defiant look.

" Answer me now, were you yourself concerned in it ? "

" No, sir."

" You confess to a knowledge of the facts which you refuse to communicate, do you ? "

" Yes, sir."

" Then mind you, sir, the punishment that should have been the culprit's, shall be yours ! "

If ever there was a class of persons who need a double share of patience in order to meet the responsibilities resting upon them, and discharge them acceptably to themselves and the community, it is school-teachers. Entrusted with the moral and intellectual training of a score or two of juveniles, with all sorts of temperaments, and all sorts of bringing up, and some with no bringing up at all ; some, so full of fun and roguery that an attempt to repress them seems like turning nature out of her course ; others, so obstinate that the most to be hoped for is sullenness, instead of submission, their parents the while watching with jealous eyes any assertion of authority which they have not seen fit to maintain ; the person who successfully manages the hetero-

geneous elements without committing some errors, must be an uncommon adept in the science of human nature, and of remarkable self-control.

Mr. Scrantum, unfortunately, was not above the ordinary level of human endurance, but he was very conscientious, and, when led into an indiscretion, sought every means to make reparation, if it could be done without weakening his authority. He felt the keenest reproof in Walter's future conduct which never manifested the least revengeful feeling; and he had gained an influence over the school that transcended his own.

Those young souls had never seen such heroism before. They were lost in silent admiration. Even the boy who gave the sly wink, though not brave enough to come forward and save him, thereby losing the opportunity to gain almost equal honors, appreciated the young martyr-spirit that could suffer for others, and profited by the lesson thus taught him.

When the term drew to a close, and the connection between teacher and pupils was about to cease, the former gave these parting words,—“My young friends and pupils,—now that we are on the eve of separation, and shall probably never all meet again in this world, I feel that justice to one of your number demands a few words from me. You recollect the unpleasant incident that occurred here a few weeks since, when, to maintain the discipline of the school, an innocent person suffered for the guilty. The names of those concerned in that affair, and the motives of him who refused to serve as informer, I have never learned; but if there are any among you

who feel any compunctions of conscience and wish to make restitution, or any who would like to know whom among you all I would recommend as an example most worthy of imitation, I will point them to Walter Claremont."

All eyes were fixed on Walter, the unconscious hero, whose look of puzzled surprise added to the interest of the occasion; and all gathered around him as one boisterous cheer proclaimed the end of school regulations. When they gained the liberty of the open air, they waved their caps in great exultation that they too had a favorite, which circumstance served them as the political occasion to imitate their seniors—and "hurrah for Walter," from the boy who spilt the ink, ended in three times three.

"And terror to sly winks!" shouted the boy who pushed his elbow. But Sly Winks was silently riddling the philosophy of the proverb, "Behold what a great fire a little spark kindleth," to reap its fruits in due season.

## **CHAPTER IV.**

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"Woods have their blossoms which we ne'er behold,  
And skies their worlds whose light is never shown,  
Ocean its treasures of untold gold,  
And earth her heroes that are all unknown.

You meet them as you pass, and heed them not;  
You may not know what hosts before them fell;  
You may not count the battles they have fought—  
The wreaths that crown them are invisible."

In a by-street not far from the mansion of the Claremont's, in a miserable basement, which always, however, bore the marks of tidiness though not of comfort within, might have been seen the other extremes of human life ;—poverty without a ray of hope to cheer it ; childhood without a smile of joy to welcome it.

Amelia Crawford was two years older than Rosalind, but so pinched was she by want, so stunted in growth, so passionless for want of the little attentions necessary for the healthy expansion of the child's nature, that she seemed more than two years younger.

Her mother had drained the dregs of the terrible cup of suffering presented by the demon of intemperance, rendered still more bitter by the injustice of the law which consigned to the husband the sole control of his wife's person and property.

Surrounded at home by all that could make life joyous and hopeful, she knew no more of its respon-

sibilities, or of the world and its hypocrisy than the pets left behind her, when, at the early age of sixteen, she confided all her prospects of earthly happiness to the keeping of another. Too young to comprehend the full nature of the new relation she had assumed, or scan the possibilities of the future, it was only the realization of youth's sunny dreams, enhanced by the rich treasure of an added love. In reply to a suggestion made by a friend who knew Mr. Crawford much better than she did, that the law should be changed which vested the wife's property in her husband at the moment of her marriage, thus exposing her needlessly to all the vicissitudes of fortune that business or speculation may incur, she spoke with a tone of indignation unusual to that gentle nature, "Do you think I would trust myself where I would not trust my property? Whatever is mine shall be my husband's!" a pledge that was fulfilled very differently from what she anticipated. Not naturally an indulgent man, and being ten years the oldest, it was very easy to assume a control to which she unresistingly yielded. He might have been ordinarily kind if strong drink had not made him a tyrant.

Always having borne a good reputation, and scorning drunkenness as if it had been a loathsome reptile, he prided himself greatly on being able to control his appetite; but, on joining a club of young men who met for convivial purposes, he found the power of restraint passing away, and, lacking the strength to resist his associates, resolved to change his residence.

Though a great trial to the young wife, she followed him unsuspectingly, ignorant of any reason that could induce him to leave the home of her childhood where they were so pleasantly situated. When she ventured to make any inquiry, his manner instantly silenced her, without the wished for information. He hoped that in leaving his old companions and the scene of his temptations he might break off his former habits and save his reputation which he regarded as the apple of his eye, from any imputation by his old friends.

Here he was mistaken. Although moderate drinking was fashionable, the world was not so stupid, as it never is, to regard a man with quite so much favor after he has begun to debase the god-like within him, which it discovers much sooner than he is aware.

For three months he struggled bravely with his appetite, and kept his resolution; but, alas! one of his old companions followed him here, and enticed him again to the terrible abyss whence he had apparently escaped. Knowing the weak side of his character, and exaggerating the facts, he persuaded him that it was a vain attempt to save the respectability already lost, for every body knew the reason of his sudden removal. A certain ingenuousness about Mr. Crawford made him spurn hypocrisy, and these words added to the humiliation already felt. That proud spirit chafed under the galling thought of honor irretrievably gone, and his craving thirst for drink was too strong to be resisted by one whose controlling sentiment was pride rather than principle, and he fell never to rise again.

Late one evening, after losing heavily by gambling, he tried to drown his mortification and remorse by excessive indulgence, and came reeling home in a state of beastly intoxication. Being his wife's first suspicion of his habits, though she had often wondered what kept him out so late, it gave her a stunning blow, which he had just sense enough to observe. Maddened by the conviction that he had lost the last claim upon the love or reverence of any human being, he vented his raging passions upon her and her sleeping babe.

Mrs. Crawford lacked the strong will, which, if it might have made her more rebellious, would have helped her to rise above her fate, and her native refinement and purity of character revolted at the life of degradation she must live with him. Like a fair and delicate flower rudely transplanted from the warm and genial breezes where it has been tenderly reared, she drooped and faded at the first rough wind. It was true she had shed many bitter tears that year as a gentle child does at the occasional harshness of its parents, and then dries them again and smiles at the first pleasant word, but love always found some excuse in the pressure of business and its vexations, and sought yet to be happy in striving to make him so.

Suddenly hurled from the fond anticipations of the young wife and mother into the overwhelming depths of despair, she saw nothing before her but darkness and desolation. Every night she trembled at the sound of his footsteps, and every morning grew more hopeless and heartsick at sight of him.

Even the infant in her arms failed to arouse any emotions of joy in her soul. She looked upon him as one born under a curse, and when, a few months after she was called upon to render up her little charge to Him who gave it, did so without a murmur. And when another, and another came and went in quick succession, she felt that it was in mercy God had taken them unto himself. Like one whose great, overwhelming weight of sorrow had checked the ordinary tides of grief, she seemed alike insensible to the ebb and flow of the surging sea of human passion or human affection.

The fourth boy survived the birth and death of the fifth and was quite a sprightly little fellow of three years, bringing a ray of sunshine to the poor mother's soul, for whose sake she was willing to live and suffer. One day a neighbor's child gave him a little kite which to him was the wonder of the age. Seeing his father coming home, he sprang forward to show it to him, when Mr. Crawford seized a stick of wood that lay in his path, which he hurled at him with such force as to injure his spine so seriously he never walked again. After lingering for some months in great pain, he was taken to the fold of his little brothers, safe from farther harm. Mrs. Crawford no longer exhibited the resignation and indifference before shown. Her newly aroused sensibilities lent acuteness to her sufferings, and she felt the full force of a mother's inconsolable bereavement. She prayed for death, but it would not come, as it never does at our bidding. Though so often breaking in upon our most cherished plans, and bearing hence

our choicest treasures, it is never the lover to be wooed and won.

About three months after Amelia was born. When laid in her mother's arms, she turned her face away with a look and tone those present could never forget, saying, "God forbid that she should live to suffer what I have suffered; better that she should never see the dawn of another day!" But Amelia was destined to live, to thank God for the life he had given her. She was a dull, spiritless child, yet a close observer could perceive that there was not so much lack of talent, as want of development. Her mother was too broken-hearted to infuse much animation, which was very essential to such a passive nature as Amelia's. She was shy of every body, and her home, poor as it was, constituted her world, for it was all she knew of it. Mr. Crawford was now an abject of constant terror. Unfit for any regular occupation, no hour of the day was secure from his intrusion, and, as if to vex his wife to the utmost, he sought every means to annoy and abuse Amelia.

The first time she ever manifested any enthusiasm was when accompanying her mother to Mr. Claremont's, she heard the sound of music, and looked up with a pleased expression, saying, "Oh mother, what is that?" He being present, persuaded her to go into the parlor where his wife was playing on the piano. She even permitted him to take her into his lap, sitting like one entranced until the music ceased, when she resumed her former listless expression, and slid down immediately to her mother's side. This little incident awakened quite an interest in

her, and gave rise to various trifling attentions which overcame in a great measure her timidity towards them all, except Rosalind, whom she regarded as a kind of superior being.

She was indeed quite a curiosity to that scrutinizing little personage, which Amelia had tact enough to perceive, knowing very well she was not what she ought to be, and was therefore exceedingly shy of her. Once, being sent there of an errand, she saw a large Newfoundland dog eating from the same dish with a cat, the result of Rosalind's untiring efforts to make them friends from the moment her father introduced the noble looking animal who received no small share of her attention, as she tested him in every possible way to see if he was cross or good natured, and great was her self congratulation for her wonderful achievement, when she saw them sleeping quietly side by side and eating together in the greatest harmony.

Amelia was not accustomed to such scenes of peaceable companionship, which excited her wonder in the highest degree. Seeing Mr. Claremont standing in the door, she ran towards him with unusual animation, saying, "There's a dog and a cat eatin' out of the same scoop, I seed 'em with my own eyes, I did." This quaint exclamation excited the mirthfulness of Rosalind, who was within hearing and burst into a loud laugh.

The timid child shrunk into her herself again, and nothing could induce her to speak another word until she was gone.

Mrs. Crawford was now reduced to extreme pov-

erty. She might have provided well for herself and child had they been alone, by her own industry ; but words are needless to explain here what is so well known to every drunkard's family.

At times the miserable man experienced all the horrors of a drunkard's remorse ; when her feelings of mingled pity and affection banished every other thought. His career was fast drawing to a close, and ended in delirium tremens when Amelia was twelve years old. One of the horrid phantoms of his diseased imagination was that of his little boy whose death he had caused, chasing him with a club, and cursing him with the most fearful oaths. In a comparatively lucid interval, a by-stander, thinking to comfort him said, "Your son is an angel now, interceding for you in the name of a holy Savior's love," but he was quickly interrupted by the raving maniac, who, starting up with glaring eyeballs and convulsive gestures, exclaimed at the top of his voice, "Hush all your deceitful wiles about a Savior and his love and angels, I tell you there's no such thing, nothing but the seven hells of the bottomless pit where we shall all go," followed by such curses and imprecations as would congeal the stoniest heart.

This death-bed scene haunted Amelia for years after, in dreams and in her waking hours, giving her passive nature its first quickening impulse and an unfavorable one too. Its effect on her mother was still more disastrous. The reaction consequent on being so suddenly relieved from all fear and anxiety, and the time now left for reflection, soon produced a melancholy state of mind.

Memory was plying her busy fingers among the withered leaves of what was once the gay and glorious blossoming of youth, and retrospection sternly casting accounts of the blighted joys, bleeding affections and blasted hopes of a life that had promised at its opening to be as bright and beautiful as Mrs. Claremont's. How vividly rose to mind the bright anticipations with which she had stepped from the threshold of a dear and luxurious home, to share the destiny of one whom she reverenced as the embodiment of all that is great and noble, and what a destiny it had been ! Then how quickly faded the memory of his faults and vices before that overpowering love which sought to palliate them through the mediation of surrounding influences or some short-coming of its own, and which magnified his virtues in the same proportion.

It is no blind idolatry that makes the virtues of departed ones so far outweigh their faults to surviving friends, but a prophetic intuition soaring to the higher life the spirit attains as it ascends from the ills flesh is heir to, which beholds it transfigured into the divine symmetry designed by its original Architect, and which is the birth-right of immortality.

It is hard to conquer human nature. How fondly we cling to the perishing clay even when wasted by disease, and the mental faculties are impaired by suffering, with a strength of affection unknown before. It is the conflict of flesh with spirit, of mortality with immortality—a crisis of love.

Mrs. Crawford was too much prostrated, mentally

and physically, to pass it safely. Her constitution gradually gave way, and after four years of great unhappiness she died. Thus ended these two lives; a sacrifice to the fell spirit of Mammon, which, like a desolating scourge, annually sweeps its thousands of victims from the strength and pride of the land, the whole extent of which will never be known until the grave shall be endowed with the marvellous faculty of speech.

Who is responsible for this state of things? To whom shall be addressed the question, Where is thy brother? Not alone to him whose avarice has cased his feelings in a rock of adamant, or who indirectly contributes his influence by permitting these wholesale traffickers in the ruinous poison to walk unblushingly into the ranks of respectable society, but to that other half of the human race who have hitherto been the unresisting sufferers, the silent victims; from whose dark and fathomless abyss of deep and bitter woes should arise an appeal to the feelings and conscience of that ever shifting, but ever ruling element, public opinion, thereby gaining access to the various channels through which it is moulded into law, and, speaking in the name of all that is pure and holy in womanhood, demand that it shall no longer be desecrated by permitting that Gorgon of pollution to rear its head under the name of respectability and success, as it now does at the ballot-box.

## **CHAPTER V.**

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"Life is the hour that lies between  
Earth and the heavenly spheres;  
And merges like some tranquil dream  
In love's immortal years."

Joy and sorrow, pain and peace, are the inevitable counterparts of nature, as essential to the completeness of life, as the different shades of coloring to a picture. If Mrs. Claremont furnished in herself an isolated illustration of the principle, that happiness, and not suffering, is the normal state of the soul, when health and vigor predominate in the physical, harmony in the intellectual and moral nature, and surrounding influences are favorable to their development, her daughter furnished another evidence, that under the most favorable circumstances for the existence of such a temperament, hereditary descent and early training had failed to do the work, and only by that law which has instituted suffering as the appointed agent for the perfection of the soul, could she reach the spiritual plane on which her mother rested. There was too much clashing of the elements, too much of the restless spirit of enquiry for the meek, sustaining eye of Faith, calmly to steer her course in such a complicated organization as Rosalind's.

It was not thus with Walter who resembled his

mother. Nature seemed to have cast him in an even mould and bestowed on him her rarest gifts. Rosalind excelled in intellectual capacity ; he, in intuitive knowledge. The truths others gained by reasoning, he knew by intuition. The triumphs others won by continued effort and stern self-denial, were but the natural unfolding of his own character.

Her sense of justice was very keen, arriving at results more through the intellect, than the moral perceptions. The reverse was true of Walter, whose reception of a truth preceded the argument. He desired proof to test his decision, not to help him form it ; while she must trace all its logical results before accepting it as positive. Their influence over each other was mutually beneficial. She looked up to him with reverence for the readiness with which he complied with the wishes of his parents, while she was considering every possible motive that could induce them to desire any thing contrary to her own inclinations, not doubting its propriety more than he, but it was a necessity of her nature to understand the reason. She commanded his admiration for the noble qualities displayed in connection with her faults, and, in her sudden ebullitions of temper, he liked to trace those heroic elements through which she rose sublimely to a conquest over self, never deeming it any virtue in himself to do what cost him no effort. It was a most fortunate thing for her to be blessed with parents who had the time and ability to study her peculiar traits before attempting to control her. Conscious of her faults, more depended

on their patience in her own process of correcting them, than in any direct reproof.

The autumn had been unusually mild, the woods assuming their variegated tints, independent of the frost-king, who had scarcely fulfilled his allotted tasks. The autumnal flowers, and many of the summer ones, more lavish than others of their blossoming season, were in full bloom until late in the month of October ere he touched them with a breath of his regal power.

To Rosalind's enthusiastic soul it was a season of intense enjoyment. Many were her rambles in the groves, those majestic temples of nature, where the lingering breath of summer wooed her to gentler melodies in fanning the fevered heat, that at times burst forth in youthful impetuosity from her ardent thirst for knowledge, which was now beginning to be slaked at its fountains.

Her father often accompanied her, watching with pleasure the indications that the impatient restlessness of her childhood was subsiding into the healthful activity of youth. A more tranquil, contented expression cast its radiance over her features which he hoped would, in time, entirely chase away the look of perplexity that cast its shadow over so much of her early years. The last walk they enjoyed together, at Rosalind's suggestion, they held a family pic-nic in the grove where her parents first met, which circumstance gave rise to many a merry joke between them, and to many questions by the children, to whom this was a very interesting piece of news.

The air was as balmy as a day in June, and a gay time Walter and the squirrels had, of whom he was particularly fond, a fact which they seemed to divine. The birds were Rosalind's greater favorites who chirped about her as if to impart the joy they felt for this genial breath of summer air.

Mrs. Claremont lived over again the days of her girlhood, comparing their measure of happiness with that of maturer years, and arrived at the sage conclusion that the prevalent idea of the greatest amount of happiness being possible to young people, because free from care, was as erroneous as it would be to call the learner of the alphabet more enviable than the mathematician, or the astronomer, as the demand is less on the intellectual powers. She did not fail to comprehend, however, how much truth there is in this idea, for the majority of the world, whose overwhelming cares oppress their faculties to such a degree, that their minds have no opportunity to expand.

"Philosophizing yet," observed Mr. Claremont, as he and the children surprised her on a little mound where she was sitting, apparently lost in contemplation, her eyes fixed on the blue expanse of water in the distance.

"Was it thus you philosophized in the days of 'auld lang syne,'" said Walter with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes, "when father did a wooing go?"

"Impudence beyond measure," retorted Rosalind, kicking along the chestnut burrs at her feet, "when the frost comes in good earnest, we'll have another stroll here after the chestnuts. I was going to say this has been the happiest day of my life, but had

the good luck to remember that I should forfeit the long promised present you are to make me, if I will break off the habit of these extravagant comparisons."

"And you ought to have an extra one for this act of self-denial, for I came very near saying it myself," said he as he pulled her down into a hillock of dry leaves, covering her with kisses, and then held her by main strength until he had covered her with the leaves.

"Do look there," he suddenly shouted, permitting her to raise her head, "I verily believe the senior couple imagine themselves young lovers again. See how cozily they are walking along, arm in arm, as if they composed the whole of the world, and nobody else was worth thinking of. I mean to just remind 'em there are two others," starting to run after them, when she pulled him back, and kept hold of him until they reached the house.

"I like to see them," said she, "and you need not be so jealous of a little cozy talk they are having. Perhaps they are considering how they shall train us in the way we should go," and both giving a bound, each ran a race to see who would reach the house first.

Before entering, she called his attention to a little root of candy tuft near the house, which had escaped the frost, as she supposed, from its sheltered situation, when she observed a curious expression in his face, and stopped abruptly.

"You didn't know I have covered that every cold night to see how long I could make you think it had

defied the frost. I had a curiosity to know what kind of a judge of the weather a person would make who couldn't tell a plant from a weed. I am going to hand your name to the society on natural science for a diploma as an eminent naturalist."

"Now stop, Walter," closing his mouth with her hands, "just because I happened to pull up the rest of it, thinking it was a weed which it exactly resembles."

"As much as a lemon does an orange," said he with as much distinctness as she would let him. "I am proud of such a distinguished sister, for the important acquisition she will make to the science of Botany."

"Well, I don't care if you have covered it up, it looks so smiling when every thing around it is killed. Here it is the middle of November, and a plant in bloom out of doors, but it does not look half as interesting to me now, as when I thought it resisted the cold of its own strength. I had watched it with a great deal of interest."

"I knew that would spoil it for you, you are such a philosopher, but I love it all the more, it looks so grateful for my care," and he petted it as if it had been a conscious thing.

"There's no knowing but it might have been just so if you had not covered it."

"Then for the sake of testing it, and letting you have a chance to carry out your point, we'll let it run the risk of the next cold snap."

"It amuses me to hear you talk about the cold

when we have not had any really cold weather this season. I should think you were about ninety."

"Well, candy tuft shall decide for us," said he, rising to go into the house.

## **CHAPTER VI.**

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### **HOME.**

*"There blend the ties that strengthen  
Our hearts in times of grief,  
The silver links that lengthen,  
Joy's visits when most brief."*

Drear and lone upon the window pane sounded the ceaseless patter of the rain, as two little naked feet shivered on the door step, and two sad, but piercing eyes, peered through the casement into the cheerfully lighted drawing room, ere the puny hand ventured to raise the knocker that would admit the little mendicant into the rich man's mansion. Scarcely had she produced a sound when the dog set up a loud bark, which frightened the little homeless wanderer into the desolate street again, until the watchman should provide a scarcely more inviting shelter.

"What is the matter with Ponto?" said Walter, looking up from his task.

"I thought I saw a glimpse of somebody as I passed the window just then, but it was so faint, if there was any one, I could not tell whether it was man, woman or child," answered Rosalind, and resumed her reading.

"There's no one at the door, Milly?" inquired Mrs. Claremont, as she entered.

"No," replied she, "as I was passing through the hall I heard something that sounded like an attempt to raise the knocker, but there was no one to be seen."

"Perhaps it was the wind."

"It must be a very trickish wind to set the dog barking, raise knockers and make you see apparitions, Rosa."

"I hope nobody is cast away in such a storm as this, I am sure."

"You are so absorbed in your book you fancy yourself on Crusoe's desolate island I really believe, talking as if any body could be cast away on land. Read on : I suppose when you get through you will favor us with some of your sage reflections, won't you Rosa ? for you look amazingly puzzled sometimes, as if you had got into a quandary and didn't know how to get out."

"Well, I have read it through at last, and there is a striking resemblance between it and Pilgrim's Progress," said Rosalind, after a few moments of silence, as she pushed from her an elegantly bound volume of Robinson Crusoe, with such force as to startle from her slumbers the old gray cat who had been permitted to take her evening nap upon the table.

"Is that all," said Walter, holding up his hands with a comical gesture, "I thought some very important announcement was coming from the flourish you made, something that might possibly affect the moon's setting or the sun's rising."

"More likely dispel some of the clouds that darken the intellects of men."

"Really then, you are turning philosopher, and so I suppose, have drawn your comparisons. It would be a grand idea for you to write a book and make yourself the heroine.

"And get shipwrecked on the same island and finally become Crusoe's wife."

"Oh fie! can't have a book without turning it into a love story. I wish somebody would offer a prize for the most interesting novel that can be written without mentioning that subject. I believe it would be a benefit to the human race. Some of the girls at school are fairly bewitched with some novels which they bring with them sometimes, and when they can catch a moment that the teacher's back is turned, steal them out from under their other books and pretend to be studying very hard when he looks towards them again. It excited my curiosity, and one day I watched my opportunity to get hold of one of them, and such a silly mess of stuff I never saw."

"That is the way you pass judgment is it, assume that all other stories bear the same stamp."

"Oh, don't talk to me any more, I want to finish this equation. Wouldn't it be a joke on Tom Middleton if I should do it without any assistance, he was so confident none of us could, because his brother couldn't, and as for his part he was not going to try. A great fellow three years older than any body else in school, and so self conceited, he thinks he knows as much more as he is older. One day he perched himself on the desk, getting off his airs, when John Hincks, a smart, cunning little fellow, gave him a slight push that sent him sprawling on the floor. He

is good natured, and never gets offended, so we like him after all."

"Is there any prize offered to the one who gets the right answer without assistance?"

"No. Mr. Spindlebotham,—that is such a funny name I always want to laugh when I speak it,—told us to see who could do it alone, and Tom had so much to say about it that three of us resolved to try our best, as much for a joke on him as anything, he amuses us so with his airs. One morning, being late at school, he wanted to be very polite, so he touched his hand to his forehead and said, 'Good morning Mr. Spindlebotham,' which made us all laugh, for none of us ever think of addressing him by name. Now Rosa you must not talk to me any more, for I have almost got it if you have not put it out of my head,— $x$  plus  $y$  equals ——"

"I should think you were a little beside yourself to-night, when you have done all the talking, to turn round and charge it to me. Never mind, go on."

After watching him for a few moments in silence, until he appeared about as much puzzled as he represented her to be, she rose, took the cat and pressed her closely around his neck, to which pussy responded by a faint mew.

"Father, I wish you would take care of Rosa, do see how she acts with us both."

Leaving the cat to Walter's mercy, she bounded off into her father's lap, throwing her arms about his neck, in which posture she remained some moments in silence, while he amused himself with twining her curls around his fingers.

She was the first to speak.

"Father, what kind of a place do you think heaven is?"

"Why child, what makes you ask such a question?"

"It must be a place with a good many different apartments in it, to admit all the various sorts of people who expect to get there to the exclusion of all others who differ from them, and with whom they would not wish to associate."

"What have you been reading or puzzling over now to put that in your head?"

"Oh, nothing particular. How is it that so many sects, as wide apart as the poles, all claiming the Bible on their side, preaching that there is no other way but their own through which we can expect to be happy, can all be right, or any of them wrong?"

"Oh Rosa," said Walter, "you are a genius certainly! It would take more than a philosopher to understand you. There are as many sides to your character as a chameleon has colors, and as many oddities in your brain as a monkey could act out in six months. I suppose it is on the same principle you draw your comparison between Robinson Crusoe and Pilgrim's Progress. What kind of a problem do you call that where all sides cannot be right and yet none of them wrong?"

"I give it to you as a mathematical problem to solve after you have finished your equation."

"Don't talk any more, for I am very busy,— $3x$  plus  $4y$ —"

"Equals the summit of all earthly ambition, and

makes one so abstracted that he fancies some one else is talking when he is hearing himself think. Just as you and I get engaged, father, he will take up the conversation and then scold me for it."

"Well Rosa, what was the idea you intended to bring out?" said her father.

"That if there is a certain standard all men must recognize and live up to in order to be happy, how are we going to know what it is when opinions differ so much? One person says this is the only true faith and another says that."

"I think you are laboring under a misapprehension of terms. You confound theology with intuition. One is spiritual, the other intellectual."

"Theology, how I hate that word! I never could understand it, and what it has to do with a person's life in making him good or bad. Why should we assume to be nearer right than others?"

"That assumption of right is based on a correct principle. In order to start an opinion or truth we must assume its infallibility until convinced of its error. We must have a stand point whence to draw our conclusions, which will be truth to us so long as we conscientiously believe it. The error lies in excluding others from the privilege of exercising the same prerogative, whose opinions are entitled to the same respect as ours. By tolerating and discussing each other's views the errors are detected, over which the truth, from its divine character, must ultimately prevail.

The claim set up by every sect to be founded on the Bible is not so absurd as it seems at first thought.

The Bible being an exposition of truth as it has been revealed to different nations in different ages, and receiving its coloring from all varieties of temperament, may be brought to the support of every shade of opinion and every form of belief. But the moment any sect sets up its claim to infallibility and shuns investigation, it begins its career as a spiritual despotism.

The religious element is inherent and will find expression in some form. It gives rise to church organizations which, though an imperfect expression of what the soul would aspire to, are in their origin the outward symbol of a truth yet but dimly revealed to the inner consciousness, destined to become clearer and more spiritual in its conceptions, so long as freedom of thought counteracts the natural tendency of organizations to supplant the living spirit by the dead letter. The great error of the religious world is, its proneness to substitute the infallibility of belief for the immutability of faith, and hence the conflict ever going on between faith and conscience on the one side, and belief and temporary expediency on the other, which makes every age a protest against the religious creed of the preceding one. As there is but one God there can be but one manifestation of his spirit. It is the same trust in him, the same hatred of wrong and oppression, that has inspired the prophets and apostles, the martyrs and reformers of all ages, whether believers in the Jewish rituals, the stern tenets of Calvinism, or the mild and beneficent sway of that eternal and unchanging Love by which the ever merciful Father overrules the sins of all his

erring children, that he may draw them unto himself. He has implanted in every human soul a divine instinct which the Quakers call ‘the inner light,’ which, if properly heeded, will guide us safely through the world, its temptations and perplexities. Through it we may learn to appropriate the pure and good, and as certainly reject the wrong. It also reveals the hidden mysteries and sublime inspiration contained in the Bible, which would otherwise be a sealed book, and confirm us in superstition, rather than lead us to the light.”

“It seems to me there are some very sensible things about the Quakers. If they didn’t condemn music, and require their members to be so odd in some things, I should like to join them.”

“I should have supposed that would be the very reason why you would like to join them. I think you take pains to be different from others,” interrupted Walter.

“Have you finished your equation? I should advise you to attend to that. I don’t try to pattern after others. It would be the height of stupidity to do or believe a thing because somebody else did. No, I choose to have an opinion of my own, and it would suit me all the better not to agree exactly with anybody. That shows independence which is a very desirable quality, and one to be commended even if it does sometimes lead to eccentricity.”

“So on that principle you anticipate a compliment for yourself, instead of waiting, as the custom is, for others to bestow it, themselves being judges. It is a trait of independence in the Quakers to be so odd in

some things, which you have been censuring in them. Not very consistent art thou."

"I don't puzzle my head over consistencies. I want to follow the bent of my own mind. What looks consistent to one may not to another. They believe in following where the spirit moves, and that's what I like. This feeling obliged to do something, because it is right, I don't believe in. If it is right, we must feel a desire to do it to be a virtue."

"I fear, Rosalind," said her father, "you would not be so willing as you think. What they mean by that is not original with them, neither is it confined to them. The dictates of conscience are to be obeyed, let them lead us where they will, as they often do, contrary to our inclinations. That would be hard for you. The cross must come before the crown. Freedom of conscience, which forms the basis of every religious organization at its birth, means the freedom to act according to our convictions of duty, however they may conflict with our own will, or the judgment of others, yet so imperative that only in yielding obedience to them can we obtain the peace of mind essential to happiness.

The higher our faculties, the greater the evil resulting from a perversion of them. Hence it is that religious despotism is more cruel and intolerable than any other, and the reaction in the effort to overthrow it often results in the other extreme, and repudiates much that is good. The Puritan and the Quaker were the legitimate children of a profligate ministry, and a general corruption of church and state, who, instead of following in the wickedness of

their fathers, rose up to protest against it in the name of the religion they professed ; and the persecutions inflicted on them for daring to attack the corruptions, naturally led them to a bolder renunciation of the forms and creeds so tenaciously cherished, and a more rigid adherence to their own convictions. Thus began a superstitious reverence for opinions, often trivial in themselves, and an undue importance attached to questions whose only merit consisted in the defence of the great principle of freedom of thought and expression. Because amusements had not been kept within rational bounds, they were wholly banished, and the divine gift of music condemned."

" I think it is wicked to condemn anything so refining and elevating in its influence as music, and for no other reason than that it is pleasing to the ear. I would go without the crown before I would take up such a cross. It is no more rational than to mortify the flesh as the Catholics do. I had a good deal of sympathy with that Popish priest in Robinson Crusoe. Seems to me he was about the right sort of a man, and Crusoe himself passed through similar experiences to John Bunyan."

" Just as I said," again interrupted Walter, " you can accede to any thing, or draw a comparison or contrast that would never enter another person's head. I guess you'd find some of the graver sort would shake their heads at you for daring to place Robinson Crusoe on the same footing with Pilgrim's Progress."

" I know that Priscilla Greenwood was greatly

shocked the other day because I said, when speaking of the two books, that, as a work of fiction, Pilgrim's Progress greatly excelled. She started and exclaimed, ' You don't call that a novel do you ? ' I laughed, and said, ' Why, what is there so dreadful about that to make you look so frightened ? I never thought of calling it a novel, but, come to think of it, why isn't it a religious novel. It is certainly a work of fiction, and so far as an approach to facts is concerned, there is much more of plausibility in the shipwreck of Crusoe on a desolate island, than in the hobgoblin adventures of Christian.' She has been shy of me ever since. What say you father ?'

" In the common acceptation of the term, Pilgrim's Progress would hardly be called a novel, although literally it may be proper enough. It is rather a delineation of the spiritual pilgrimage, and as a work of genius, stands unrivalled, not merely for its combination of talent, but also for its adaptation to all ranks and every condition in life, exclusive of no sect or creed."

" So you think father, that it should not be classed with Robinson Crusoe."

" I do not think it will suffer from contamination. I was not comparing the merits of the two, only speaking of their different characters. The other, you know, is not strictly spiritual, but comprises also physical enjoyments and privations, representing outward and material life with the inner, whereas the first represents only the inner."

" So much the more sensible then, for we cannot separate the inner from the outward life on this

planet. There is more of the foundation of facts in Crusoe, just as I said, and therefore as a work of fiction, John Bunyan's work is the most romantic."

"Stick to it Rosa, like a hero, perched up there like a queen on a throne. I've just thought of a good sketch of yourself as the heroine of a story. Imagine yourself so original and independent, you long for some sequestered spot where you will be subject to no control, and therefore set sail for some lonely island in the Pacific, where you can reign with such undisputed sway that no human being dare approach you."

"Why Walter, I would like to know whether you meant that all as a joke or half in earnest. You do not really mistake me so much as to suppose I spurn all control? It is one of the happiest sensations of my life to be controlled as I often am by you, and if you did not know it then here is my confession."

"I think Walter understands you Rosa, but I am glad to see you come out with so much frankness and arrest even the least suspicion of a misunderstanding. I hope you will act on that principle through life, and not allow yourself to harbor in secret an unkind feeling towards another which might be at once explained away, or shown to be without a cause. How many cases of hatred and ill will, and their still more sinister sister, revenge, might have been avoided if, instead of allowing the passions to add fuel to the flame, by suggesting a thousand things to the imagination, that had not a shadow of truth, reason and judgment had been followed by going to the source

of the matter, and confronting it in its first stage without any exaggeration."

"The theatre is a good place to illustrate this, and now we will discuss that subject. What a quiet time we are having. It seems all the pleasanter for the storm outside. Mother, why don't you speak?"

"You had better give her a chance. She could not get a word in edgewise," said Walter.

"It's you that fill up the chinks. After telling me repeatedly that you did not wish to be interrupted, you have improved every opportunity to slide in some thing, and now do not even allow mother the time to answer a question."

"It seems to me my children delight in running each other to night. Walter, how does your sum progress, or your equation rather?"

"Oh nicely. I shall get it one of these days, that is, if Rosa will let me alone."

"Walter! I wish father would send you from the room till you have finished it."

"I fear if I did, my daughter would be interceding for him to come back. How is it about the theatre, what speculations have you been making upon that?"

"Priscilla Greenwood's mother says it is a very wicked place, and she would not allow a child of hers to go there upon any consideration. I know you never appeared very anxious for us to go, yet you have taken us there sometimes, and I have enjoyed it. Havn't you Walter?"

"I don't like it. Nothing but love, love, love from the beginning to the end of the chapter. Dying for

love, hating for love, and last of all killing somebody for love."

"It would be a marvel for you to agree with me in anything I say to night."

"Walter has not yet entered those mysterious portals," said Mr. Claremont in an undertone to his wife, but sufficient to attract Walter's attention.

"What was that you said, father," demanded he, rising from his seat.

"Something to your credit, though not essential for you to know," replied his father.

"Rosa, won't you tell me," continued he in a pleading voice, coaxingly placing his hand in hers.

"Don't you wish you knew?"

"No, I'll find out by my own knowledge."

"That's what you will if you live long enough; you've gone back to your sum in high dudgeon. The next we shall know it will be done at short notice."

"Walter, I admire your good sense in that remark about the theatre. One of the most pernicious influences resulting from it is the low, sensual character in which it presents the holiest emotion of this mortal life, trifling with that sacred instinct which from its divine and spiritual nature should claim exemption from the vulgar affinity with base-born passions there so invariably and notoriously represented."

"Yet, father," said Rosalind, "such is a true picture of actual life, if history be reliable. It is full of machinations and plots of that description, and Shakspeare's genius, fertile as it was, probably did not exceed the reality. Nothing takes like his plays."

"I know it. We do homage to talent wherever we find it. I suppose it is all we can expect of a theatre since it professes to be only a place of amusement, totally indifferent to the moral or immoral influences engendered, farther than to ensure a successful patronage from the community. I was thinking of the good it might exert, calling into exercise our highest and noblest feelings by arraying in equally attractive colors the triumphs of virtue over vice, instead of displaying so much that is bloody and revengeful, to kindle the passions. Love of the dramatic is implanted within us which it is lawful to gratify within certain limits. I do not think it displays a highly cultivated and refined mind to be a habitual visitor at the theatre, for the reasons I have stated, yet if well disciplined will generally be proof against its debasing effects, from the fact that it can have no affinity with the lower passions. But before the character is formed there may be great danger of vitiating the moral sense with such an indiscriminate mixture of virtue and vice, therefore I have been very guarded in taking you there. I did not think it best to exclude you from it entirely as the time must come when you will have to mix with the world, discover its baseness and hypocrisy, and also be surprised with much that is noble and honorable where you least expect to find it."

"You think then that we may learn something of real life there don't you?"

"Oh yes, as we do in novels. A proper discrimination is to be made. The sickly, sentimental trash that has so disgusted Walter should be universally

condemned for the benefit of the human race as he said, but there are those truly exalting and beneficent in their influence, whence we may derive a more thorough knowledge of human nature, than from any other source."

"I think it would be a great advantage to Mrs. Greenwood to read something in that line besides Pilgrim's Progress. She has the most narrow, contracted mind of any body I ever knew, and thinks there can be no good people but those who believe as she does. She will not allow Priscilla to leave her apron strings except to go to school, and then gives her strict orders how to behave, forbidding her to join the other girls in any of their sports. If she happens to laugh out loud at home her mother is as cross and crabbed as a sea owl. I should be perfectly miserable to live so. I couldn't. She wouldn't control me as she does her."

"That's what she wouldn't; you spoke the truth then, Rosa, but what kind of an animal is the sea owl?" ejaculated Walter.

"Seeing you are so smart, you may find out that by your own knowledge, too."

"How happens it that you and she have contracted so much of an intimacy when there is no resemblance between you, and you do not like her mother well enough to enjoy going there very much."

"Of course that's reason enough for her to like her," said Walter.

"Well, she talks upon subjects that I like to talk about, and though we do not agree, I enjoy drawing her out, and sometimes she gets pretty well puzzled

with my arguments. I think she has a superior mind, but it has always been cramped up in a nut shell. Her mother would not like to have her associate with me if it were not for our grave conversation. She has no fear of my influence over her, and indulges great hopes that her's over me may be an instrument for my salvation, for with all her crossness she thinks the world of Priscilla, and well she may."

" My dear daughter, I am afraid you judge Mrs. Greenwood too harshly. Nature has not endowed her with the soft, musical voice of your mother, or that genial temperament which carries smiles and content wherever it goes. Besides, her plans for life were thwarted in her youth, and she seems to have borne the cross ever since without anticipating a crown, and seems conscientiously bent in training her daughter just so."

" Did you know her when she was young ? "

" Oh yes. She was one of the gayest girls that ever tripped the floor at the fashionable balls in the city, though without her parents' knowledge. They lived in the country a few miles distant, and were strict Calvinists. A young man of respectable connexions, and for ought I know, of respectable character, sought and secured her love. The bitter opposition of her parents, on account of his different religious views, wrought so upon her fears and conscientiousness, that she broke the engagement, and soon after joining the church, became a scrupulous observer of its rituals ; but it was evident to all who had previously known her, that it was not a willing

sacrifice. She grew morose and reserved, carefully avoiding all her former associates."

"I never could see how Mr. Greenwood could fancy her, he is such a contrast. I know his religious views are as rigid as hers, but he is always so pleasant and agreeable, and so handsome too, any one could not help liking him."

"Handsome, Rosa! if that isn't the weakest speech I ever heard you make, as if beauty would make us love a person any better," observed Walter.

"How you do take me up in every thing I say. Affection is not founded on beauty, but you cannot deny that beauty is attractive and very properly so, but the want of it never weakens our attachment nor prevents us from loving as much. I think mother is handsomer than you, father, but I must say I love you a little the most. You will not be jealous, will you mother?"

"No, my darling, I shall never be jealous of the love your father wins."

"Crackee! I didn't think beauty was coming under discussion. Mother, don't you care! I believe I love you a little the most, not because you are the handsomest, but because you are my mother—a good reason. But Rosa is so different from other folks; and somehow—don't you think I care any thing about it, father,—it always seems to me as if you love Rosa a little bit more."

"Than I do you? All secrets seem to be coming out to night. Come here a moment Walter, and rest awhile, though I do not think you have hurt yourself

by close application. Can you give any reason for thinking so?"

"No, father, I told you I did not care any thing about it. I feel as mother does."

"That is not answering my question frankly, as you generally do. Do not fear that you will displease me. You will observe that I have not yet disputed you, but I have a curiosity to know in what light you view it. Then I will talk it over."

"I don't believe you will get me to say any more than I have said."

"Wouldn't you like to have me speak for you Walter. I know where the pinch is. He is afraid he will have to give himself too much credit. He knows that I have been so much more trouble than he has,—"

"Why don't you go on Rosa? that's smart to leave right off there," said Walter.

"I guess I shall have to speak for both of you, I see you understand it. Rosa is as conscious of her faults as we are, and she will excuse my plainness if I allude to them now. She has been the source of care and anxiety you never were, Walter; not so much for the faults in themselves, which doubtless age and experience would do much towards correcting; but certain tendencies of her mind were very unfortunate for a happy or successful issue, with all the vicissitudes and disappointments that meet us through life. For this reason I have sought earnestly, not to change her character, which I do not desire, but so to guide her that she will of herself perceive and rectify her mistakes. Her perseverance

has excited the admiration of us all, and inspired me with the hope that she will display the same energy and fortitude to overcome the obstacles and bear the trials that may beset her future pathway ; but still I know that it will not be without suffering and conflict she will attain to that peaceful submission, which in you, Walter, is a state of quiet content inseparable from your uniform, happy nature.

Sympathy with suffering often creates an attachment that would otherwise never exist, and one already existing strengthens, if possible, which is not inconsistent with the law of natural affection ; for those who are strong in themselves being less dependent on others for support or enjoyment, can better dispense with it. But what am I saying ? My head feels a little confused to-night. I do not mean that Rosa is not strong, or that you are not equally dear to me. I mean that she has imposed upon me the greatest responsibility, and consequently, has engrossed more of my thoughts. If called upon to choose which of you I would most willingly surrender, I fear that it would be a trial like that of the woman whom Solomon judged, and I should cry out, both, if need be, but spare me from choosing." And a voice whispered, "Thou shalt be spared the trial."

For a few moments there was a deep silence. Mournfully the wind swayed the old oak which but a few weeks before had swept the window with its leafy robe, whispering, as it sighed over its present bleak and desolate appearance, of the alternate joys and sorrows of three generations of men, whose home

had nestled amid its branches ; yet in all the changes time had brought, no woodman's axe had been permitted to invade the luxuriant growth which often interfered with their own convenience.

At length Walter left his father's embrace and resumed his task, but not until he had reminded Rosa of the burden she might possibly be if she kept her present position much longer. "I am afraid father is tired," said he, in a low voice.

"Oh I never thought of being heavy, I will get down a few minutes, but shall come back again, for I want you to sing to me yet father, as you did when I was a little girl, and mother must play on the piano."

"No, no, sit still, you are not very heavy."

"Then I will get a cricket which will make me a little lighter."

"Sit still Rosa, I'll get you a cricket ; it seems to me you are calculating on a pretty long evening. It is already nine o'clock."

"We have talked enough for the present, only there's one thing I'd like to know. Speaking of Shakespeare, do you think there is anything of an immoral tendency in his plays, father ? "

"No. He gave a faithful representation of his times, exposing their glaring inconsistencies under the fascinating guise of his own inventive genius. In general the highest order of plays acted at a theatre are his. Their historic character invests them with a deep interest, and impresses the mind so strongly with the pernicious consequences of the low estimate set upon morals, that we instinct-

ively recoil from the gross sensuality masked under such gorgeous colors as the reflection of the perverted moral sentiment of that period, instead of being attracted, as weak minds are, by the sickly sentimentalism which a vulgar taste assimilates to itself in the lower order of theatrical entertainments, sanctioned neither by the general refinement of the present age, nor our own individual convictions of what should constitute a healthy, refined taste. Good and evil are so closely intertwined in this world that it is impossible to define clearly the exact dividing line between them. Our first care must be to build up a genuine, virtuous character, strong enough to be proof against the follies and seductions of the clap-trap of alluring sensations which please, while they fail to exalt, or serve only to debase in whatever guise they come. I received one of the highest impressions ever made upon me at a theatre. In the midst of a battle scene the curtain rose upon six young maidens dressed in white, with olive branches in their hands. Instantly all discord was hushed, every weapon dropped, and all eyes were fixed upon them as if entranced by an angel vision. Even now I seem to feel the inspiration of that hour."

"Do you think it is ever right for men to fight and kill each other?"

This was a hard question for him to answer. He who had dwelt with such enthusiasm upon the heroic details of the Revolutionary war, leaving his native land to enjoy the blessings of the free institutions which were its glorious fruits; he who had followed Washington, in imagination, through the pains and

trials of that eventful struggle, and sympathized with him when, owing a duty to his country his eminent qualifications fitted him to discharge, he was the peculiar mark of jealousy which the pressing emergency of the hour forbade him even to notice ; he who had admired the greatness with which, with a single eye to his country's good alone, he triumphed over all and won the imperishable title of "Father of his country," "first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen ;" should he dissent from the first and only incident upon which his future fame rested, his success in war, to answer unequivocally as instinct suggested, the simple question of a child ?

Perhaps a faint radiance from the opening glories of another sphere just ready to burst upon him, illumined his conceptions at that moment. With a confident voice and a mild assuring look, that met the earnest gaze of Rosalind as her eyes queried the reason of his long silence, he answered, while soul and sense negatived the other answer, which would not have failed to bring on questions he might be still more puzzled to reply to. "I think not, my child."

" Now we will drop our discussion for to-night and sing the rest of the time. I like a stormy evening occasionally. There is such a pleasant contrast between our cheerful room and the howling wind and beating rain outside, but I hope there is no one suffering, especially that little beggar girl. I wonder what has become of her ? "

" Then you think there was a beggar at the door ?

If I had had the least suspicion of it I should have gone out in search of her," said her father.

"I did not think much of it then, as Milly said she went to the door, but Ponto never barks at nothing, and perhaps he frightened her away. The more I think of it, the more confident I am of a glimpse of some sort of a bonnet. Oh Ponto! you must learn better manners. That was not civil. You should frighten only rogues away. There, see how penitent he is, he seems to say, 'Forgive me this time, and I will never do so again.'"

"I've got it, I've got it!" exclaimed Walter. "Halloo, pussy cat, don't rub it out, stretching your long paws out here, and opening your mouth as if you wanted to swallow all the knowledge you can get without working for it. Father, did you ever see such a funny cat? She will sit straight up and go to sleep, and nod just like folks; and if we speak to her she'll open her eyes just a little bit and then nod as if assenting to what we say."

"She's a wonderful cat, no doubt, and one of her most wonderful feats is, as you will think, that she knows your step. She will start out of a sound sleep when she hears it and look for you as eagerly as a child for its mother."

"I've noticed that she's always up and wide awake when I come in, but never stirs afterwards for anybody else."

"Then you've finished your equation have you, let me see it?"

"Yes, Rosa, it is finished at last, and that is wonderful, in the midst of your talk."

"In which you had to take part now and then. Yes, that is right. How smart you will feel now. Sit down on the cricket and lay your head in my lap. Father is going to sing to us, and presently we'll join in concert."

"No indeed, Rosa, I don't come down to that yet, to sit at your feet. You may go back to 'little Johnny Horner, sitting in the corner,'—as most suitable for you, and I will go on—to Cicero," and he whistled merrily away.

"That's a good idea. I wish you would sing little Johnny Horner, father."

So he began with the nursery rhymes of her childhood, gradually waxing on to a more serious strain when she joined her voice with his; and at her solicitation her mother accompanied them on the piano. The rich, musical tones of Mrs. Claremont's voice, the rapturous glow of her countenance, the graceful play of her features suggested, as Milly often observed, the presence of an angel, and perhaps the suggestion was never more apt. It is for such choice spirits one would fain reserve the dispensing power of those celestial harmonies, whose inspiring anthems speak to the lowly sons of earth to raise them heavenward. Nothing can be more dissonant than listening to them from a voluptuary.

Surely we may pardon much to the superstition of that sect which, recognizing the divine character of music, in their argument that only those whose devotional feelings were sufficiently pure and exalted to prompt them to such sacred expression of them should be permitted to do so, in their zeal banished it altogether to prevent its abuse.

"Home, sweet home," was then sung with a most joyful appreciation of it by this trio. From this they passed to the happy sequel, when, all pain and sorrow ceased, and separations known no more, a blest reunion awaits us, and sung "The better land." When they reached the lines,

"Then those who meet shall part no more,  
And those long parted meet again,"

Walter chimed in to complete the family circle though somewhat to impair the melodious symphony of sounds, not having so good a voice as the others. They closed with the hymn,

"Spirit, leave thy house of clay;  
Lingered dust, resign thy breath;"

When singing the last line Mr. Claremont felt a sharp pain through his temples, but did not speak of it, and they retired for the night;—Walter, to dream of new triumphs;—Rosalind, to meditate upon this evening's enjoyment, and picture to herself new realms of thought which lured her on, till, lost in rapture, life rose before her as one grand panoramic scene, upon which she would leave no trace of imperfection to mar its beauty, no discordant background to impair its imposing sublimity. Little did she dream that the web of Fate had so closely entangled in her delicate net-work every cherished anticipation of the future, and every prompting of a noble ambition; that only from the purified incense of a love sanctified through suffering, would she walk victor-crowned as one of the heroic band who have learned to say trustingly, "The Father's will be done," ere permitted to rise higher.

## CHAPTER VII.

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" There is no death; 'tis but a shade,  
In kindred dust the form is laid;  
There is no death,—it is a birth,  
A rising heavenward from the earth."

The next morning being very clear and cold, which Rosalind thought a favorable time to test the enduring qualities of the flower discussed between Walter and herself the day before the storm, she hastened down stairs to look after it; when she met her mother, whose anxious countenance immediately arrested her attention. "Mother, is any thing the matter?" she abruptly enquired.

"Your father is very seriously ill," Mrs. Claremont replied in a tone of voice which unconsciously betrayed her secret fears to Rosalind's quick apprehension.

She immediately sought his presence, but only to listen to his incoherent words. He had passed a restless night with frequent paroxysms of pain, then showing signs of delirium. The frequent visits of the physician indicated his anxiety about the result, whose opinion Mrs. Claremont never asked, divining it too well to subject herself to the torture of being told. Day after day passed without bringing any encouragement of his recovery, and the only solace of hoping against hope was finally merged in her

overpowering desire that, if life must be despained of, consciousness might be restored once more. Another glance of tender recognition, another word spoken in the familiar tone which was such sweet music to loving hearts, was a coveted boon that would soften the anguish of the stroke, and be a hallowed memory through the coming years.

After a night of intense solicitude, when life struggled with death, as the morning dawned under a most propitious sky, and the sun was slowly gilding a feathery cloud in the orient, reason returned, and Mrs. Claremont thrilled with joy upon hearing Her name called as of old. "What day is it?" he enquired. On being informed that it was Thanksgiving morning, he drew his wife nearer to him, and with that peculiar smile which always lent a charm to his happiest moments, said, "Could a more lovely morning be desired to blend the last of earth with the first of heaven? Mourn not for me. In a few short years you will come to share with me the fulness of a love, beside which ours here on earth, pure and perfect as we thought it, is but the opening bud to the full blown rose." As the eyes of the dying man rested on his darling Rosalind, who had scarcely left his bedside during his illness, a momentary pang disturbed his serenity, and he closed them as if in prayer. Pale as a statue, she had maintained the most rigid composure through it all, watching every motion, and listening to every sound, trying to catch the faintest ray of hope. Not a tear came to her relief through those long watchful hours. The shadow of death hovered about her like the spectral

vision of a dream which it is the greatest joy of the waking thoughts to dispel, but which alas, chilling all the warmth of her nature, was now to be faced as a reality. Mr. Claremont opened his eyes again, and motioning her to kiss him, thus addressed her, "Trust your Heavenly Father as confidingly as you have trusted me and all will be well with you. If his discipline shall seem sterner than mine, remember that he has also as much greater power to reward." At these words all her pent up anguish burst forth, and she fell weeping on the bed. He raised his hand feebly to fondle for the last time the pet curl, one shorter and more silky than the rest, and giving the other to Walter, said,

"I go to the Promised Land,  
Where all who meet shall part no more,  
And those long parted meet again."

His voice faltered, his hand dropped from the curl that had twined itself around his finger, a smile of ineffable love, joy and peace passed over his features, and his spirit crossed the portals to the unseen world. He had gone to his Thanksgiving feast in heaven.

There is something deeply significant in the placid serenity of the death smile. In the tumultuous rush of emotions that crowd upon us at such a moment when every careless word and thoughtless act come like so many accusing spirits, we feel that all is forgiven, and nothing can disturb that peaceful repose. Is it not so?

In that realm of higher knowledge to which the spirit ascends in its nearer approach to the infinite Source of all wisdom and love, no dross of earthly

corruption will be permitted to shroud its vision, or dim the glow of affection's golden chain whose indissoluble links bind mortality to immortality. It will know and feel only the power of that love which is stronger than death, broader and deeper than the perversities of human nature, and capable of diffusing its own immeasurable greatness over the remembrance of the errors of this life.

Beyond the objects of our outward sense, stronger than any tie of earthly recognition, deeper than any other emotion of the soul, stretches this invisible bond, invisible because immortal, and immortal because divine. The object of love may be taken from us, but the power of loving is increased thereby. That which was only lent is withdrawn that we may know how much more precious is that which has become a part of us—the emotion incorporated into the spiritual nature, which is ours through eternity.

“God gives us love. Something to love  
He lends us: but when love is grown  
To ripeness, that on which it thrrove  
Falls off, and love is left alone.”

It may be owing to the intimate connection between body and spirit that the latter leaves such a serene and happy expression as that presented by the death smile, in the same manner as the emotions in life are reflected through the countenance.

To Walter this had an intense charm. “Look Rosa,” said he, “he is trying to tell us how happy he is.” He felt a sacred presence pervading the house, uniting heaven and earth, as it were, in the holy communion that attends the departing soul. To his hopeful, trusting nature, sorrow was a stranger.

Life was a perpetual joy, springing, not from boyish thoughtlessness or youthful indifference, but from a maturity of mind, which with the growth of years, accepted its vicissitudes of good and ill as alike blessings sent by a Father's hand. Even death was but the birth of a new life, the blessed Liberator bringing to thousands the first great joy of existence.

When Rosalind's emotion had subsided, nothing seemed real. All was dreamy, shadowy. As they laid him beneath the pine-tree's shade, amid the glorious beauty of that Indian summer day, she felt the awakening vigor of a new life, as if spring-time had come, and was bursting forth in song amid the solemn arches of that majestic grove where so many had lain them down in their last sleep, but over whose spirits the grave had no power. Often as she had trodden those paths by her father's side and watched the day's soft decline through the wild lattice work of dense foliage which no human hand ever imitated, when the last rays of the setting sun sent his golden beams across the silvery waters to this chosen site of the honored dead, discoursing of the beauty which tree and shrub and tiny floweret lent to the impressiveness of the service to which it was consecrated, he had never seemed so near, nor the sky overhead appeared so glorious, nor such celestial voices floated round her as now. Millions of angels sung their anthems of welcome to him who had just yielded to the divine summons, which the inspiration of the hour wafted in voiceless yet audible strains to the quick ear of the soul's intuition.

"Dust to its narrow house beneath,  
Soul to its rest on high."

"Why should we mourn," said Walter a few days after as they were sitting in the twilight, "when we know that he is so much happier? We shall miss him, oh yes."

"We shall miss him at the fireside circle, and in the crowded hall,  
We shall miss him at the morning dawn, and when the twilight  
shadows fall,  
When the noon tide sun is shining, when the midnight moon is  
beaming.  
And the stars in silence twinkle, o'er the calm of nature gleam-  
ing."

"Is that some of your composition?" asked Rosalind, in the first familiar tone of voice since the evening before her father was taken sick, when they indulged in so much joking.

"Yes, I composed that and another verse the night after father was carried away, which I will repeat if you like. I never felt so lonely as I did then. While he was in the house it seemed as if angels were present, hovering about him, and I could not realize that he was not here and would never speak to us again. Then I thought how selfish it was if we really believe what we profess to, to cling so to our friends here. Don't you think so mother?"

"Certainly it is. After watching by your father's bedside and witnessing his suffering, I cannot describe the sensation of relief I experienced when his spirit passed its last mortal agony and soared beyond the reach of earthly pain, which I try to keep before me. What must come to us all has only come to him a little sooner. Where's your poetry?"

"Yes, I miss thee dearest father, in every oft frequented place,  
I am told of thy departure by every fond, familiar face,  
Lone and pensive, sad and tearful sit I beside thy vacant chair,  
While the drooping floweret whispers, I too have lost thy tender  
care."

"That is very good," observed his mother.

"I had no idea that I had a poet brother," said Rosalind. For a few moments her interest in Walter's poetical attempt rallied her drooping spirit, but immediately a reaction came, when an overwhelming surge of grief bowed her like a bulrush, and she buried her face in the sofa and wept.

\* \* \* \* \*

There are some bold, inquiring spirits who will never accept reason or written evidence, as proof of those great truths which must become a part of the inner consciousness, to be felt as well as believed.

It is written, "Ask and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;" and if the soul occasionally reaches after knowledge that belongs not to this world, it is only anticipating what shall be revealed hereafter. When first we stand in the presence of a deep affliction, as if the fountains of life were suddenly unsealed, we are prompted by the rushing stream of emotion to accept the present and its vicissitudes only as we can dive into futurity and solve the problem of life. It is perhaps fortunate for most people that the healing effect of time, and the returning attractions of the world, divert them from such a field of speculation, as fruitless as it is perplexing.

The investigating mind of Rosalind was not to be satisfied with any thing short of the uttermost bound of human possibility, seeking from analogy with the most minute details of positive knowledge, the solution of those mysteries that belong to eternity.

This sudden diversion of the healthy vivacity of

youthful feeling into the stern, rigorous channel of intellectual problems, soon induced a morbid state of mind. All former amusements and employments were dropped, her books neglected, and every incident associated with the past studiously avoided. Her companions gradually forsook her, youth being of too buoyant a nature to dwell long in the presence of sadness, for which she cared not.

All that a mother's unwearying love could invent, and a brother's untiring devotion devise, were powerless to divert her from her mournful reverie, but they did not despair. Trusting the inherent strength of her character to win the victory in time over present faults and inconsistencies, with a sweet, tender patience they waited.

Still she neither murmured nor made any outward display of the keen shaft that had wrenched every fibre of her being. It was a silent, tearless grief. The elastic step was gone, the merry laugh was hushed, and the lustrous beauty of her eyes had faded. In their stead came a listless indifference even in minor details to which she had been wont to bring as much of the activity of her mind as in the more important ones, while the serious decision with which she inflexibly resisted every attempt to interest her in any of the pursuits congenial to her tastes, contrasted painfully with her former enthusiasm.

There was no more kindling rapture in that face, as the hour of sunset drew nigh, and the silent majesty of the heavens awakened fresh emotions of the divine Omnipresence.

The stars looked down with a mournful light, the

evening shadows exchanged the fantastic variety of her childhood's imagination for the gloomy phantoms of a vague, undefined sensation of dreariness; the moon, that shone in unclouded splendor through the whole week of the Indian Summer, which, owing to the unusual mildness of the season, had protracted its annual round until December, shed its pale, cold rays cheerlessly enough over copse and meadow, ravine and cliff. Every one knows the changed aspect of the whole material world, when one of the lights that radiated the inner self has merged into shadow, leaving us to grope our way in darkness, until the radiance of a new light, emerging from ourselves, shall penetrate the shadow and shine with the combined brightness of both. Even Spring, with its freshening gales and whispering zephyrs, when flower and bird, the springing grass and the murmuring brook, attest the birth of a new life from the ice-bound shroud of Winter, may suggest to the lonely mourner only the painful association of decay and death which hang like a sable pall over all familiar objects.

Not such was Mrs. Claremont's experience. Though many an hour of daily anguish and midnight prayer bore witness to the severe struggle through which she was passing, her abiding faith illumined the dark valley, and nature's sweet influences reminded her of the "Better Land," where sorrow and sickness cannot enter,

"Beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb."

Banishing her own grief, in the presence of her children she always wore a cheerful smile, and

Rosalind often reproached herself for the stupid indifference with which she rewarded her thousand delicate attentions ; but she treasured them in her mind, and marvelled at the great forbearance that never gave way to a word of impatience or rebuke. Her mother understood her temperament too well to attempt any futile parade of argument in order to convince her of her unreasonable grief, which would only intensify it by driving it more despairingly inward. Reason is always a comfortless comforter at such times. It may serve to regulate, but it was never intended to control the emotions. They bring us joy,—they bring us grief; and we have not the power to say, Why comest thou ?

Submission will come at length, but it must come according to its own natural laws ; it cannot be forced upon us by any mechanical art of the human intellect. It is the serene, spiritual child of prayer and faith, born of speechless suffering, but borne triumphant in the loving Father's arms to a world of joy and peace.

“Only with *silence* as their benediction  
God’s angels come,  
When in the shadow of a great affliction  
The soul sits dumb.”

## **CHAPTER VIII.**

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"Each has his own one path in life,  
A circle small within his ken—  
And a small circle too, perchance—  
We cannot all be famous men."

No unimportant personage in the household of the Claremont's was Kate Drummond, the cook. Of Irish descent, she was full of the mirthful humor of her race, with which was combined much of the sober, solid sense of the Anglo-Saxon. Never given to fine-spun theories or useless regrets, she turned every accident into a joke, and practised the philosophy others spent their time in preaching. Having talent that would ennoble any occupation, if it had been developed and cultivated, she never subjected herself to the discipline of a thought that would check the wild exuberance of her nature. She had a quick perception of facts and could make a correct application of principles, which, however, had no more connection with each other than the random strokes of a fiddle with the element of music.

A trustworthy servant, and scrupulously exact in every duty devolving upon her, she was not so fully developed in the region of conscientiousness as to be always careful of the propriety of speech, or wounding the feelings of others, when she could thus serve a turn for indulging her fun-loving disposition.

This was a source of annoyance to Walter, whose fastidiousness about any approach to dissimulation and strict regard for truth, often led him to reprove her, but with no other effect than to have a fresh joke served on himself.

He was a great favorite of hers, whom she was ever ready to serve, whether up to her elbows in suds, or engaged in the more delicate art of cakes and pastry, the most tempting specimens of which were always reserved for him.

Another inmate of the family was Milly Dayton. The opposite of Kate in every respect, singularly enough they contracted quite an intimate friendship.

In both existed a prevalent vein of good humor that was never out of sorts with anybody or anything ; one passing by trivial vexations as not worthy of notice ; the other laughing them down as the most philosophical way of disposing of them, meeting here on the same level. Milly was a philosopher whose ideas were founded on principle and method. Quiet and reserved, theoretical rather than practical, possessing a mind of great depth and refinement, cultivated as her own private property rather than for the advantages it might confer on others, she was one of those gentle, meek spirits that resemble the modest little flowers growing in the clifts of the rock, which elude the superficial gaze of the world's busy throng, but attract the attention of the student of nature, who discovers even here the embodiment of that great law of symmetry and beauty which stamps every created object with the divine purpose of its being.

She belonged to the order of dumb prophets who stand on the threshold of eternity, gazing into the divine purpose which reveals fragmentary glimpses of what we are and what we must become ; by their own innate perceptions comprehending the boundless capacities of the soul with its susceptibility to the slightest sway of virtue or passion ; and praying for a touch of inspiration that shall serve as a key to unlock the prison doors of their divine conceptions, that they may come forth to elevate and purify the grosser, outward life of themselves and others. To such the ordinary routine of worldly cares and the bustle of a mere business life, is like a crushing mill-stone, grinding continually the finer sensibilities with a secret, acute pain. The part assigned them in the universe often leads through paths diverse from the rest of the world, as if they stood aloof from choice, when in reality compelled to it by a necessity of their spiritual organization. Enjoying society, it is so seldom they meet with those to whom they can unfold their innermost thoughts without being misunderstood, they shun it as if no power of response existed in their souls.

Doubtless if Milly had spent her youth in an atmosphere calculated to develope rather than suppress her true nature, her inner life would have asserted itself more strongly ; while on the other hand had she been less submissive, or her experience more painful, forcing nature to assert her rights, the hour of utterance might have come.

Left an orphan at an early age, she was deprived of those tender home influences which childhood so

so insatiately craves, and to which it is entitled. The family who took her out of pity, having many children of their own, were well disposed and intended to discharge their duty towards her. Belonging to that large class who consider business the paramount aim of life, from which childhood had no immunity, their sons were taken from school as soon as they were able to work in the field, and their daughters sent to assist them in pitching hay and gathering potatoes. Fortunately they were not endowed with the delicate, sensitive organization of Milly, and the words of command or sharp rebuke issuing from the lordly head, were received as the most familiar household dialect known among them. As they grew up, imbibing the same ideas that governed the parents, the world received a new accession to its business thrift and house-wifely tact. Better so than to fall into pernicious habits or slovenly neglect of domestic duties, which have driven many a man to dissipation, but it is not among such natures the finer emotions of the soul are developed. Milly's imaginative mind was not at home under these influences, and suffered continually in its silent craving for sympathy. Possessing little of the boisterous element of childhood, she had an intense yearning to be loved and cared for, as in sunny dreams she felt again the warm embrace of her mother's arms and listened to her fond words of endearment, from which the shrill voice of the house-maid summoned her to the dreaded, monotonous round of toil; when a cloud sometimes rested on her spirit, but it was only transient, always looking forward to a future which

somehow would respond to this unanswered longing of the present.

All dreamy, poetic natures have this prophetic insight, which the unthinking aspirant after mere worldly treasures can neither attain nor comprehend. It was impossible for people, whose constant motto was work, an hour of Sunday for religious reading being observed very much as a disagreeable duty, the cross that would ensure their salvation and which comprised the extent of their intellectual pursuits, to understand this child seer, this prophet maiden, whose sublime and beautiful trust buoyed her above her trials and imparted a degree of cheerfulness that was mistaken for content.

From eighteen to twenty she lived with an aunt, a sister of her father, who treated her with very little kindness. Unwilling to take her when a friendless orphan, on account of the trouble, she was little disposed to atone for it now by acting the part of a mother and friend. Besides her incessant habit of fault-finding, the family jars between herself and husband grated harshly on the ear of one who was ever dwelling on the beauty and harmony of life, as it might be, if the supremacy of love were acknowledged.

The bone of contention was often very trifling, such as the state of the weather, one saying it was warm, and the other cold; and one pleasant Sunday was embittered by their different opinions about the wind, he maintaining that it blew west by the sound of the bell, and she, that it blew east because her

head felt so bad. She was nervous, and he obstinate, two very uncongenial qualities.

In one particular they agreed,—the tenets of Calvinism. Here they met at the same altar, and bowed before the same God. Grace was regularly said at every meal, the morning and evening devotions punctiliously observed.

She was more self-righteous than he, and consequently more exacting. Unmindful of her own faults, she held others to the most rigid standard of profession and morality. Even towards woman, who, through the pressure of want or any other cause yielded to temptation, she was severe and inexorable in her judgment, tolerating no palliation of the act from whatever source it came. Milly could scarcely have found a more uncongenial home. Her boundless charity sought to exonerate every one from the charge of being as bad as appearances indicated, a point upon which they differed so widely as to provoke an estrangement of feeling whenever the subject was mentioned. Her devotional feelings could easily have been moulded to any creed embodied in a loving spirit, and had her aunt manifested the least interest in her happiness, she would have twined around her with all the intensity of an ardent nature craving something to love. As it was, an insuperable barrier existed between them which it was impossible to remove. Milly was so sensitive, that every unkind word forced back the natural flow of affection which would otherwise have been manifested under these circumstances, and might possibly have disarmed some of her aunt's coldness and harshness.

It was a pleasant contrast to her former life when she went to reside in Mrs. Claremont's family, and one that fostered the ideal element of her nature which sought expression in writing. Sympathizing through her own experience with those sensitive, bleeding spirits that dot here and there the pathway of life, lacking the strength to buffet its stormy waves and faint by the wayside, whom we tread on daily without knowing it, and the world passes by as unworthy of notice because it cannot appreciate the wealth of soul, nor discern the delicate fibres quivering beneath the unprepossessing exterior, she wished to plead their cause, but, unfortunately, lack of the power of expression so dwarfed the natural language of the soul as to rob it of its vitality in the attempt to give it utterance. At length she hit on the idea of writing a novel which furnished amusement enough for Kate, who had no sympathy with abstract theories and metaphysical speculation, and yet liked to hear Milly's views, which gave her something to criticize and dissect. Enjoying new ideas which she chose to embellish in her own careless style; her impulses came out in a rough diamond way; sparkling, uncouth, yet vigorous and racy. Above all was that dominant love of fun which appropriated every thing to its service, no matter how serious, with which was mingled no small share of good sense.

"You write a novel!" said she, "I should as soon think of Walter settin' himself up for a stage player, or Miss Rosalind as a pattern young miss in a coquettin' shop. You'd make it as solemn as a fresh made widder with borrowed weeds and onions

in her eyes ; but never mind, I'll make the fun for you that'll make it as green as a country landscape."

"I have already commenced it with too romantic an affair I fear ; it sounds so sentimental and school girl-like. It is so hard to find a beginning."

"If you can write anything of that sort you ought to thank your stars and take courage. The charm of a story is to have somethin' in it that never did happen nor never could, and it must be full of all manner of shines to make it take."

"I don't know about that. Stories are most successful that represent the real passions and emotions of the soul, and are most true of life."

"Fudge ! who cares whether they are true or not, if they are only funny, but I want to hear yours to see what you can write, whether its worth cryin' over."

"It opens with a widower, Mr. Buzport and his daughter, Merilinda."

"Capital choice o' names ! I like 'em, they sound so merry. Buzport, that means buss."

"Mr. Buzport is her father, not her lover, so you needn't come to the kissing part yet."

"That's just like you, can't think of anything but a lover connected with a buss, while all I was thinkin' on was a good hearty smack, seems as if I could hear it now."

"The place where they lived was one of traditional interest. In the times cf the skirmishes between the early settlers and the savages, a man had lived there, a Quaker by birth, who was a great friend of the Indians and suffered very little from their depre-

dations. In one of these skirmishes, when the whites were victorious, one of the savages fled to him for protection, whom he concealed in a little cave that had recently been discovered in the rear of his house, just large enough for a man to crawl into. He was so grateful for this act of kindness, that some years afterwards when a plot was formed by the savages for a general massacre of the whites, he stole away from his tribe to inform his benefactor and have him raise a signal from the mouth of the cave that they might spare him and his family. The humane hearted man revolted at the idea of saving his own life while his brethren were sacrificed, and he immediately set out for the wigwam of the chief bearing such messages of good will and pledges in the name of the whites, that they were deterred from their murderous purposes, and he returned in safety to exact the fulfilment of his pledges. Around this cave an enclosure was built"—

"I don't like your sentiments there, I should call the whites the savages. What business had they to come and drive off them that had more right here than they had. I'd a skinned 'em all alive an' sent 'em back to where they come from till they could come and trade like decent folks, and show that they was civilized themselves."

"Oh Kate, it makes me crawl to hear you make such expressions as skinning alive."

"Oh yes, you are very feeling then, but it wouldn't make ye feel so bad to think of the poor savages bein' driv' from their old homes they loved so well, an' had a right to."

"I don't think that was right and have not said anything to sanction it, but let me go on. 'Around this cave an enclosure was built to commemorate the event, which Mr Buzport had removed, and substituted in its stead a hedge supplied with seats.'"

"That don't sound right. That enclosure might as well a' been a hedge as anything else, and then it sounds as if the seats was put right into the hedge, and them would smash it all down."

"It was a favorite retreat of Merilinda's, and a delightful spot, exceedingly so on the night alluded to here.

Gently the zephyrs breathed the wooing melodies of that bland Indian Summer day, as the sun set in his regal splendor behind the western waves, while a few fleecy clouds lingered behind to do the worshipful honors of his departure; and as the twilight deepened into the shades of evening, not a single mist dimmed the twinkling of the stars as they gradually made their appearance; the Milky Way with its myriad worlds suggested its mysterious wonders to the fertile imagination of Merilinda, soon to be eclipsed by the modest glory of the moon, which, shedding her soft, silvery light over spire and terrace, mountain and meadow, gently banishes all this splendid retinue from her train that she may reign supreme. Merrily the waves danced their joy around a magnificent steamer proudly completing her maiden trip over the peaceful waters of the beautiful river which stretched far and wide in silent adoration."

"I'm afraid somethin' awful sentimental is comin' now, after such a perigation."

"While Merilinda sat there enjoying the scene, Mr. Melrose walked round the other side of the hedge opposite to where she was sitting, when catching a glimpse of her he was entranced by her extraordinary beauty. Her neck looked like alabaster and her"

"You don't mean to say she sat there with her neck bare at that time o' year do ye. If consumptions had been as common in them days as they be now, she'd a' catched her death o' cold dressed as warm as could be, settin' there so long that time o' year in the moonshine."

"I'll alter that, but then in a story there must be some play of the fancy."

"I suspect that ain't all fancy. I 'spose you've heard about Mr Claremont and his wife first meetin' in a wood the first time they ever see each other."

"No indeed! they did? I should like to know all about it, do tell me. How did you know?"

"Yes, I knew that would be what you'd like, but then I promised never to tell of it. You see my cousin used to live here, and one time when she was goin' by that piece of woods out there she see 'em walkin' arm in arm, and heard him say, 'there's no place on earth seems to me like this wood 'cause here I first saw you.' He didn't say anything about any hedge, I guess that had been pulled down afore his time, nor about any seats; I guess they stood up. I don't believe they had any such moonshiny courtin' as you tell about. Now that's just what I like, lovers and moonshine, one is just as fickle as the other."

"Do you call moonshine fickle?"

"Yes, if you should agree to walk out with your

lover some bright, moony night, it would be sure to go into a cloud."

" You needn't dwell so much on that, for mine is not intended for a love story."

" I'd like to see you write one that wan't. It would pop in some how, just as it has into your'n at the beginnin'. Don't you 'spose I could see through that Mr. Melrose, what was first in your mind, whether you meant it or not. Folks don't see alabaster necks without a cause, I reckon."

" I shan't have that in. I want something more sensible and dignified. There's too much of such trash written already for the benefit of young people."

" I guess if you don't have any thing in but what's goin' to benefit somebody, a pretty lean kind of a mess you'd have of it, but you want some poetry to start with, and I've got some for the first chapter. You know you want a place to lay your siege."

" Scene, you mean."

" No, that's what I call a siege. I 'spose you think I don't know what that means.

Oh, blessed Killarney,  
Flowin' with lasses an' honey,  
And nice golden butter made of skim-milk."

" Butter made of skim-milk! Couldn't you have gone a little wider of the mark?"

" No matter, that'll do for a play of the fancy, and sounds rich, as if we could almost taste the melted butter and molasses runnin'. And then it makes a kind of a puzzle whether lasses means molasses or country girls.

" Now I've thought of a capital character to last you all the way through. Ben Sykes, or, as he was al-

ways called, Sykes, 'cause his father was dead and the title of the family descended on him. He was studyin' for a minister, but he didn't know preachin' from prayin', and I've cut up the most shines with him and he never found it out. He wanted to know one day what we was goin' to have for dinner, and I told him, a dead calf."

"A dead calf!" says he, "I shan't eat any of it."

"Very well," says I, "you can do just as you like, but I guess the rest on 'em will be glad enough to eat it." So he didn't eat any, and looked at 'em so wishful as if he wanted to tell 'em, which was just what I wanted, but he didn't. The next day we was goin' to have a chicken for dinner, and there was a little bit of a hen coop out in the yard which I got and cleaned up to put on the table with a live chicken in it, and says I to him, 'thinkin' you wouldn't eat a dead chicken I've got a live one for you,' and then I guess he understood what the dead calf meant."

"Where did he preach when he got through studying?"

"In the kitchen. He was the awkwardest man you ever did see, besides bein' so scatter-brained. His hands come down half-way between his knees and his toes, and his shoulders reached the top of his ears. He had green eyes, white eyebrows, and yellow hair that stuck up like the quills of a porcupine on his head. He used to come into the kitchen to practice, and the way he'd fling his arms np, they'd touch the plasterin', and he'd bring his feet down with such vengeance they shook down the stove-pipe once."

" 'Thar,' says he, 'don't you see, the judgment's a comin', close follerin' at our heels ? '

" 'And you are the very old feller himself, I do b'lieve,' says I."

" What were his doctrines, did they correspond with himself ? "

" *A-hem* y-e-s,—his doctrines was enough to set the world a-fire without any stove-pipe with the smell o' the brimstone as the words come out of his mouth. His favorite text was the lake of brimstone and fire that come rainin' down out of heaven. I said to him one day, says I, ' Sykes, rain and fire don't agree very well together and seems to me it would be more consistent and sort o' christian-like to take for your text where it says,

" He sendeth his rain on the evil and on the good; on the just and on the unjust."

" 'Yes,' says he, 'that's pleasin' to the ear, and shows that you are born of your father, the adversary and devil, thinkin' you shall escape the burnin' lake.'

" 'Why Sykes,' says I, 'we can't have but one father, and if God is our father, how can the devil be too ? ' That sort o' staggered him, though I don't pretend to be divine, nor know nothin' about necrology or what you call it, but I could talk him down any day, and make him go and study his cataplasm all over again."

" If you should try I wonder if you couldn't use words more at random. This is a profitable way of spending time listening to your raillery."

"A great deal more profitable than writin' novels. I don't think much of these literary genuses whose heads are always in the clouds and never know nothin' of what's goin' on here. I don't believe some on 'em, if they should starve, could get a meal o' victuals. Now I take a great deal more pride in gettin' up a good dinner than I should in bein' the most prodigious literary genius that ever lived."

"There's a great deal of good done by writing, or books would not be such a source of enjoyment and instruction to us. It opens a communication between ourselves and other minds which could not be done in any other way, besides being good mental discipline for the writer."

"Oh get out with your discipline. I get enough of that from Walter. He had the impudence to tell me to day that Dinah, Miss Daggett's cook, was as good as I was. I'll bear anything in the world from Walter, but when he goes to comparin' me with a nigger I won't stan' it no how, not if it come from the holy Virgin Mother herself. I'm goin' to fry some jack-flints for breakfast as black as the king's crow for him, and I'll see if he thinks black cakes are as good as white ones."

"Then it's time for you to retire, and I begin to grow sleepy. I've had enough of your nonsense for one night."

"No not yet, I see you are bound to go on with your novel, and I've got a little anecdote for you. Where I lived at a country parson's once there come a young couple to be married, not very young though,

forty or the like, but real green, they didn't know nothin' about tyin' the knot."

"So when the minister asked the woman if she would promise to love, honor and obey, she flew into a teapot and out at the nose ; 'did you 'spose,' says she, 'that I was so sheepish as to come here for that? No! I come here to be married, an' I'll be bound if I'll ever promise to obey any man. No! that's what I won't, I'll live an old maid and turn into ashes an' fly out o' the top of the chimney fust!'"

"An I'll be bound if you shan't have the chance afore I'll marry ye, Sal,' says the man an' took his hat and walked off, leavin' the astonished parson to mourn over the awful depravity of human natur', instead of regalin' himself on the marriage fee."

"Not much love there, but then there's no truth in it; you made it up."

"You little innocent fool, you don't 'spose every body marries for love do you?"

"They ought to."

"Did you know I was married once?"

"No! how did that happen, and what became of your husband?"

"What become of him? I don't know. He died and I never troubled myself to know what 'come on him afterwards. I thought 'twould be a sort o' pretty notion to have somebody to wait upon me, bring in wood an' chips and draw a pail o' water, but what do you think, if I didn't have it all to do and take care o' him into the bargain. That's the way, all honey beforehand, sour grapes afterwards."

"It was good enough for you if you had no higher motive than that."

"Half the folks in the world does jest so, only they don't come out honest an' say so. But I come off rather worse than some on 'em, for he was a mean old scamp ; but then I was lucky, he didn't live long."

"And you were glad of it ?"

"Of course I was. What did you 'spose I wanted to be harnessed to him all my life for ? "

"You have made up this story to impose on my credulity. If true you would not make so light of it."

"Jest as you like, but I guess if you'd had to live with him, you'd believe it fast enough. He come home one night with one of his drunken cronies, and set up and talked and laughed till he put his jaw out, and how he did look."

"Was that what caused his death ? "

"No indeed, I guess he didn't die so easy as that. The other man went after the doctor, an' he, poor soul had just gone to bed, and didn't want to be disturbed I 'spose for a drunken man's frolic, or maybe he thought 'twas nothin' but the ager, and instead o' comin' he sent two big black pills, an' then I thought I should'a died laughin' to think how they was goin' to set a man's jaw when it was out o' jint."

"How heartless that was in you when he was suffering so much."

"My laughin' didn't hurt him any, and it made me feel better. 'Twas bad enough for it to happen

and get the doctor out o'bed such a cold night without my makin' myself miserable over it."

"Then the doctor came afterwards; did you go after him?"

"Me go after him! no, guess I didn't. I'd a' set it myself first. One o' the neighbors happenin' to be out late come home jest then and see what was goin' on, and he went and got him. I guess he thought he never should grow very rich on such practice for he never got his pay. I might have paid him."

"Why didn't you? I should have thought you would from a sense of honor, if nothing more, when he had to get up at midnight too, which is worse than daytime."

"Did you 'spose I'd be so green as that, to pay him when I had all the wust of it."

"He was not to blame for what your husband did, and I think he had the worst of it."

"Yes he was to blame, or somebody else jest like him, to let such stuff be sold that will make a man act so like a heretic, and then throw all the trouble of him on his wife. No, he didn't come that over me. Once they brought him, so drunk they wouldn't have him in the rum shop, home to me to take care of, and that was all well enough."

"Let that be as it may; you married him, which you ought not to have done unless you loved him; and then, if he had lived as long, and acted as bad as Amelia's father, you wouldn't have it in your heart to talk so about him now he is dead."

"Oh dear, now I pray, don't go to preachifyin'. I'd 'a just hung him up in a slip-a-noose on a bean-pole. If he'd been somebody else's husband I should have called him an upright mean feller, and the sooner the world was rid on him the better, and his bein' my husband don't alter the case. That's good common sense doctrine. I did all I could for my old man when he was livin', and now he's dead, peace to his ashes and greater peace to me. Good night and pleasant dreams."

## **CHAPTER IX.**

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**"Oh Friendship! flower of fairest hue,  
To earthly hands so seldom given;  
Thy bloom shall other climes renew,  
Thy native soil is Heaven."**

"Now Rosa, I am going to show you something that will make you laugh if you will come with me," said Walter to Rosalind one day as he sauntered from school, and met her just ready for a walk. She accompanied him to a shop window where was displayed a comical looking picture, representing fun and mischief, with the inscription, "Mother is gone away."

A merry looking little sprite, with a curly head and dimpled hands, had found the way to her mother's choice drawer containing her costly laces, jewelled fan, and various delicate fabrics, and seated on the floor with a kitten in her lap was creating wild havoc among them, while at a little distance a broken vase with scattered flowers, and an overturned inkstand deliberately pouring its contents over books and embroidery, attested the child's innate love of freedom.

Rosalind looked at it but was far more attracted by another picture, in which the clasped hands and upraised face awakened a sympathetic thrill of emotion.

Concealing his disappointment at the little notice  
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she took of his favorite picture as well as he could, Walter observed to a school-fellow standing by,

"Wouldn't you like to be an artist and dwell in such a world of beauty?"

"No, not I. I would rather be a spectator of the beauty after it is created, than work so hard to create it. Only think what a task it must be to get every tint and shade just right, and you know an unnatural painting is a most ugly thing to look at."

"That's true. One ought to have a natural gift for it like Michael Angelo when he saw a divine form imprisoned in a block of marble. As for the labor, an artist must enjoy it, thus being able to create from the resources of his own mind, and never can suffer for want of any thing to kill thought."

"Then I suppose you will be an artist," replied his companion.

"Oh no, I am going to be a lawyer."

"You a lawyer! impossible! I would as soon be a thief as a lawyer."

"Why? in a theoretical sense it seems to me one could do so much in that line for promoting the welfare of the world, when law and government form the basis of society."

"For promoting the misery of the world I should say, in a practical sense. They'll lie as fast as they can speak, and make black white if they can advance their client's cause, and make a penny by it," retorted his companion as he walked along.

"Don't you think that is a funny picture," said Walter to Rosalind, trying a second time to get her interested in it. "You used to be so fond of paint-

ings I thought you'd enjoy that, and there's just enough variety to suit you."

"It is a very pretty picture," said she, as she turned away.

The artist who had quietly observed them from the inside and heard their conversation, now stepped to the door and invited them in to look at his picture gallery. She could not be persuaded, much to his regret, hers being a face he wished to study. The conversation, rambling as it was, had interested him on all sides, particularly between the two lads, for the investigating spirit it displayed in both of them beyond their years.

Walter accepted the invitation, while Rosalind walked moodily homeward, reproaching herself for the courtesy she had shown.

A slight shade of impatience flitted across Walter's brow as he met her that night, which she observed. It increased the dissatisfaction already felt, and at an early hour she retired to her chamber.

"Oh dear," said he to his mother after she had left, "I wonder if Rosalind is never going to be herself again. I cannot get her interested in any thing, and she was once so enthusiastic. I was in one of the finest picture galleries to day I ever saw, but could not persuade her to go in or scarcely look at a painting which I thought particularly pretty, and one that would have pleased her so much once. Mother, why could'n't she have been more like you?"

"Have patience with her my son; it is something new for you to be lacking in that. I never heard you complain so much before."

"I never saw her so disrespectful before. It troubles her, as I saw by her looks when she went out to-night. We should have had such a nice time if she had gone in. The proprietor of the gallery took great pains to explain all the pictures, many of which he brought from Europe. He hasn't been here long, and has just completed the arrangement of his rooms. He invited me to call often, whenever I wished, and I shall be pretty certain to avail myself of the invitation. Mother, are you willing I should invite him here?"

"Certainly, I would like to become acquainted with all your friends."

"You will like him I know. You know there is something about some people that seems to elevate us by coming in contact with them. That is the way James Morgan says I influence him, which I never was vain enough to believe. He came along to day when we were standing at the window, and was quite huffy because I said I was going to be a lawyer. I don't see why it isn't just as respectable to be a lawyer as a minister. They are both professions, and both followed to obtain a living as a general thing."

"Poor boy, his father has been swindled out of so much by unprincipled lawyers that he probably thinks they are all alike. Mr. Kingley had the money to bribe with, and they managed to get Mr. Morgan's place away from him by as unfair means as ever were devised. Mrs. Morgan had some property when she was married which was swallowed up with the rest, a fact she never could forget."

"Why mother, how could they be bribed when they were under oath to tell the truth?"

Mrs. Claremont smiled sadly at the check his enthusiasm had received upon his favorite theme, and his unconsciousness of the intrigue and wickedness carried on in its name.

"There are sometimes doubtful points which an unscrupulous man may, with a little cunning, bring to the advantage of his own side without directly violating that moral principle which he barter away for money."

"When I am a man and get to be a lawyer, as I mean to be, I shall look after some of these rogues, and I don't believe they would dare to face me with their money bought arguments which I would demolish in the name of that justice law was framed to secure," replied he with great warmth which drew another smile from his mother at his youthful ardor.

"I suppose Rosalind will not care to have that young artist invited here," resumed he after a pause.

"Why? I do not think she can have any objection."

"No, I suppose not, only she must be embarrassed to see him after treating him so unceremoniously. She looked at him, and walked straight by without answering a word. I guess he was puzzled enough by the way he watched her, but he almost smiled. She put on such an air of defiance as if she thought it was impudent for him to ask her to come in. They say artists must study human nature to be successful, and I shouldn't wonder if it would please him right well to have an opportunity to get hold of such a

singular character. She is real good, and he'll find it out.

"What is his name?"

"Ernest Livingston, and it is a name I like too."

Not many days elapsed before Walter invited him to spend the evening at his mother's house. Rosalind as he feared, gave him a cold reception. She took very little part in the conversation, and even left the parlor before the departure of their guest. She looked upon him very much as an intruder, and anticipated frequent repetitions of his visits from the intimacy she saw springing up between him and Walter. So far as they were concerned she was glad of it, not being naturally a selfish person, but grief is always selfish, and she did not wish to have their own private circle broken in upon by strangers.

They had made no new acquaintances since her father's death and she coveted seclusion. However, she always acted entirely independent of him, and he never urged her into conversation. Aside from treating her with true gentlemanly courtesy as he did every one, he took little notice of her. A very friendly feeling sprung up between him and Mrs. Claremont, the latter offering him the hospitality of her house whenever it would be agreeable to him, which was quite often. She could not have selected a more desirable companion for her son, and his being several years his senior she considered also a great advantage. Though only a boy, Walter's quick perceptions and moral intuitions imparted the maturity of manhood, so that his most intimate associates were always older than himself. He soon became

reconciled to Rosalind's coldness towards his friend when he found he was not annoyed by it. She pursued her eccentric way unmolested by any one, and apparently without interfering with the happiness of any. So she thought at least, and tried to quiet her conscience.

One pleasant afternoon, Walter persuaded her to take a walk with them in the woods. She was quite cheerful when they started and Ernest tried for the first time to draw her into conversation. She chatted pleasantly for a while, until he and Walter glided away in pursuit of a squirrel which was nimbly scaling the wall. When they met her again a singular transformation had taken place. She scarcely spoke, and watching her opportunity preceded them homeward. The chill she left behind so clouded their spirits that they too walked home in silence.

## **CHAPTER X.**

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"There goes a gentle angel  
Throughout this earthly land,  
To comfort all earth's sorrows  
Sent by the Father's hand;  
And in his look is quiet,  
And mercy soft and mild—  
O, follow him forever,  
Patience, the Angel Child!

Reply he hath not always  
In answer to thy quest:  
'Endurance' is still his motto,  
Not far the place of rest;—  
And so, without much speaking,  
He journeys by thy side,  
And thinks but of the fair, grand goal,  
Far in the distance wide."

Oh Life, what would'st thou be worth but for the hereafter! Liable at any moment to be clouded by sorrow, thy sunniest hours are but a passing dream! Thy happiest memories chilled by some poignant regret, thy noblest aspirations checked by the promptings of distrust or inefficiency, thy highest sense of duty overpowered by timid counsels, thou art one continued struggle between heaven-born impulses on the one side, and earth-bound propensities on the other. Aye, but it is for the hereafter thou wast created.

What we call life is only birth;—birth of the spirit-life, the soul, First link in the chain of being, part of one harmonious whole.

Through toil and sacrifice ; up the rugged ascent

which is gained only by prayer and faith, down the steep chasm whence thou shalt rise again through the deep waters of repentance and humiliation, dost thou reach the blissful summit where thou shalt lie down in green pastures beside the still waters, feeling that the Lord is thy Shepherd and thou shalt not want forevermore.

It was a dull day in December. The snow had not yet whitened the earth, but the leaden grey aspect of the clouds portended an approaching storm.

It was particularly a dull day to Amelia Crawford, who had accepted Mrs. Claremont's offer of a home in her family the present winter. Her brain had been unusually busy for a few weeks, and now wearied and exhausted, she sat listless and sad over her work. Days, weeks and years passed heavily by as she plodded on her lonely way after her mother's death, not knowing of a single human being with whom she could claim kith or kin, and feeling like a waif on the ocean strand, waiting for another wave to bear her onward into the circle of the great human family, the only kinship she was henceforth to know. When that wave came it swept her to the threshold of a new existence. Hitherto separated from all the influences that stimulate to thought and action, contact with the world aroused new feelings, and awakened aspirations to which she was before a stranger. Introduced to the society of books, history, ethics, romance and biography brought their treasures to her awakening faculties, among which she revelled with that delicious sense of rapture a fresh acquisition of knowledge brings to the enquiring mind,

until a labyrinth of wonder and perplexity opened before her as she began to comprehend the complicated net-work of desire and aspiration, passion and sentiment, and other diverse agencies through which the human soul works out the great problem of its existence and destiny.

Developing too suddenly for a healthful activity of the brain, which gave her power, but not a harmonious character, she displayed many eccentricities that stood in the way of gaining the friendship the social element of her nature coveted now, though undeveloped before. The diffidence early ingrafted by the surrounding influences of her childhood had not worn off, seldom venturing beyond a monosyllable in reply to any remark addressed to her, which made her quite an object of curiosity to Walter, who could not imagine how it was possible for any one to live in this bustling world without manifesting some degree of animation, and wondered whether she could be thinking at all or whether her mind was a vacuum. He would have been astonished to know what was going on there. Though apparently so timid and quiescent, underneath the seeming dulness existed an energy of thought, and a determination of purpose not to be resisted or overcome. One accustomed to study human nature, could read this in the knitting of the brow, and the compression of the lips as she sat earnestly plying her needle on this December afternoon. Little given to conversation generally, she was now resolutely mute, wishing no one to speak to her, and replying briefly as possible to any question. Too many unpleasant memories flitted through

her mind; too many unanswered questionings arose from the depths of her soul, for the wearied mental powers to throw off and play the agreeable. Milly sat at another window busily engaged in hemstitching a ruffle, sometimes looking out upon the dreary, angry aspect of the water in the distance as a gust of wind howled by, and occasionally stealing a glance at Amelia, as if desirous to enter into conversation if she only knew what to say. There were many points of resemblance between the two, which unfortunately, combined the qualities in each most unfavorable for an intimate acquaintance.

Kate made one of her unceremonious calls, bantering Milly about her ruffle which she "was very sure meant somethin' out of the common course, or she would not be doin' such finery work instead of writin' her novel," sending a blush to Milly's cheeks, and almost bringing a smile to Amelia's motionless lips on witnessing her confusion.

Suddenly recollecting that her presence had been requested in Mrs. Claremont's room she immediately withdrew, without waiting for a word of reply, and thus continued her remarks to Rosalind and her mother as she passed through the open door near which the former was seated.

"There's a chance for you to get a little diversion by goin' into the other room and lookin' at the two spinsters if they was only a little older, sittin' up there as straight as a broomstick at each winder, and I don't think they've spoke the whole afternoon. I started 'em up a little, and it would have done you good to see Amelia brighten up as she did for a

minute, always lookin' so like a moonbeam gone to sleep. It's strange how mighty takin' 'tis to every body to hear the leastest hint about gettin' married. Now I never said a word, only touched Milly up a little about a ruffle she's takin' so much pains with, and conscience, I don't know but there'd been a scene right straight off if I hadn't left. I shouldn't have 'posed Amelia was bright enough to catch the meanin' of anything, and Milly for all what she's said that she wouldn't marry a man that drinked or smoked, now she's got most round the first corner, I shouldn't wonder if she'd change her mind. Nobody knows what they'll do till the time comes."

"I don't know how it happens that she is so free to talk with you. She never seems disposed to enter into conversation with the rest of us," observed Rosalind.

"Just the easiest thing in the world. She thinks you all know so much mor'n she does, but I'm so light-headed and careless, she ain't afraid of a venture with me."

"Milly knows enough if she only knew how to act it out, and I admire her good sense, having too much confidence in her to think she will ever swerve from her principles."

Kate cast a quizzing glance, as Rosalind said this without looking up from her work, wondering what might be passing through her mind then, and regretting that the proprieties of her station as a domestic forbade the familiarity with which she would have treated a similar remark from Milly.

The early twilight soon forbade their sewing long-

er, yet, still they sat, maintaining an unbroken silence, as if some strong magnetic force riveted them to the spot. Milly had an intense desire to penetrate the inner sanctuary of Amelia's soul, but was denied the privilege: No human being was the confidant of her thoughts. Perhaps a slight feeling of regret for some neglected duty, either through ignorance or thoughtlessness, which might have mitigated her mother's sufferings, lent poignancy to the sorrow working in the outlines of her face, anon compressing the lips still more, as she looked into the dreary distance, and thought of the still more dreary hours of the long night whose sleepless vigils she kept. Not for a life of ease was she born, and there was work for her to do.

When other homes were made miserable by the same curse that had robbed her of childhood and blighted the sunniest years of youth, she could not be content to lead a life of comfort and self support merely, but what could she do? A question that implied no unbecoming self-distrust, for no one could seem less qualified for any ordinary undertaking. Apparently as cold as an iceberg she was never swayed by a single momentary impulse; "lookin'" as Kate expressed it, "so like a moonbeam gone to sleep." But those dull eyes were yet to be lighted with the brightness of a high, spiritual life;—that timid, faltering voice to grow strong in the inspiration of God's truth.

Was Milly content now that she lived in the midst of those tender affections which had been the Alpha and Omega of her day dreams, and of which she had

also been deprived through the whole part of her early life? Not by any means. Neither was she unhappy.

It is not always the severing of a tie, or the awakening thrill of a new love, that sends us in quest of higher knowledge, and a grander, deeper life. It is the natural unfolding of the divine nature within us, a reaching after something we cannot grasp,—the natural cry of the mortal child for its immortal parent. There come such moments to all men and women, varying in degree according to different temperaments, but none the less real,—times when the unutterable aspirations of the soul may be compared to a prisoned bird longing to soar aloft in the full and free exercise of its powers, and yet unable to free itself.

Have patience;—a time will arrive when an angel will come to unlock the prison door; while through these years of earnest waiting the needed preparation goes on for the appointed work.

There are those, patient waiters, faithful watchers, whose mission seems to be, to serve by waiting, and no idle mission is it. They are an indispensable element in society,—the medium through which the leaven of a bolder truth than they have dared, or had the ability to proclaim, finds its way by their acceptance of it to circles whence otherwise it would be excluded.

It is true that to some only “it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God,” who are the ordained servants of the lowest, speaking for them in terms they readily understand, but which they have

not the capacity themselves to do. Milly had the knowledge but not the capacity to communicate it. She had an undefined consciousness, a dim foreshadowing of the beauty and glory of that guarded sacredness of life which is reserved for those who drink of the cup from which Jesus drank ; so ethereal that no outward eye can form any conception of its grandeur, so intensely spiritual that no outward sense can comprehend or explain its celestial attributes.

Such a person could not be satisfied with an ordinary life, and she was one not likely to lead any other than an ordinary life. No stern "I WILL" ruled that gentle nature ;—no indomitable persistency of purpose revealed those strong points of character which, if they display greater faults, press through every obstacle to achieve a triumph all its own.

Had she suffered like Amelia, or committed some great error, which demanded an expiation, all the latent forces of her soul might have gathered in a single heart-throb, and, bursting from the effect of the pressure, startled the world from its slumber to set the seal of condemnation upon some foul wrong which, perpetuated from generation to generation, hoary-headed with age, had obtained the reverence of mankind. Had she known how her mother had suffered, how day by day she toiled her life away to obtain the pittance that was to secure a home for herself and child together, she might have denounced in terms of righteous indignation the oppression that still threatens the chastity of thousands of defenceless women who, in stifled attics and damp basements,

waste their health and bloom merely to keep body and soul together, uncared for by those enriched thereby.

An organic wrong, the monied interest will take no thought for, the selfishness of which will rear a barrier like adamant, and woe to the trembling hand that shall dare to raise the feeblest blow ; but what power can resist the tongue of eloquence ? Even selfishness stands aghast, and the little crevice through which the penetrating ray first finds an entrance closes and opens with every vibration of the popular heart, until the adamantine barrier gradually and unperceptibly crumbles away.

Mrs. Dayton was a woman of refined tastes and artistic perceptions, which, not being able to indulge on account of the grim master, poverty, that sat like a relentless tyrant at the threshold of her parental home, hurried her into the rash step that led to greater evils than poverty, seeing nothing before her but the menial occupations then open to woman. Cruelly deserted by her husband shortly before the birth of Milly, the extra exertions she was obliged to make to support them soon undermined her health. It was a pleasant room they occupied, where the morning glory shaded the window, and the air was fragrant with lilac and honeysuckle. Reared among such influences could Milly be other than poetic in her aspirations ? She came like a blessed sunbeam to cheer her mother's soul, and when the tie was severed and the child left alone, a dependent on strangers, how like a crushing weight the blow came ! As Mrs. Dayton had married in opposition to all her

friends, she received none of their sympathy and Milly was the more unwelcome, none of them being disposed to take her.

\* \* \* \* \*

The snow came that night accompanied by a strong north-easter which piled it in drifts, and imparted a fantastic beauty to the surface of the earth, dazzling the eye with its pearly whiteness as the sun burst forth in his greatest splendor towards noon of the next day. Amelia still felt an unusual depression of spirits, meanwhile reproaching herself for shutting her eyes to the beauty of the outward world, which ought to buoy her upward in songs of gratitude and praise for the manifold blessings bestowed upon her. Why should she not stifle every feeling of discontent and quench every aspiration that sought a broader life, being satisfied to live as others did, seeking only present enjoyment and accepting the time-worn ruts of past ages as sufficient for the pathway of all the future ?

Yes, why, that is the question. Thousands have asked it who, wearying of the search, have abandoned it as a fatal delusion. Persevere and the moment will come. Then no more vain questionings. Soul, be still, and listen for the answer :

#### BECAUSE THOU ART IMMORTAL.

She went to church that evening but not to listen to the preacher. He had no power to minister unto sorrow like hers. The sound of the music awakened no thrill of rapture now, though it had by no means lost its charm and power. She longed for intercourse with some such choice spirits as she had held com-

union with in books, the inspiration of whose noble thoughts had hallowed many an hour of her lonely lot, that she might derive consolation from their counsel, sympathy and support, instead of wandering on alone in doubt and despondency. And yet not alone. He whose midnight anguish has immortalized the garden of Gethsemane was walking beside her,—a still greater than he was holding her in his arms. Now that she was buried to all sense of worldly aspiration, a glorious resurrection awaited her.

Suddenly as if borne on the tongue of a heavenly messenger came a voice, “Follow me and I will give thee inspiration ; what thou askest I will grant.”

Then, as in the twinkling of an eye, this world which, but an instant before was so dark and dreary she would gladly have closed her eyes on it forever, was transformed into a paradise of light and joy, full of beauty, poetry, music and love ; a new radiance shone from every eye, and she saw in every human being the type of God’s own image, a fellow-traveler in the pilgrimage of life, and felt in each a companion and friend.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is at such moments we truly live. Then comes the proof of immortality—the finite is lost in the infinite, and the soul touches the realities of the eternal world.

Because some are not susceptible to these influences but go sighing through life for a “witness,” despair has erected her throne on the hopes of thousands whom the religion of universal love might have

sent on their way rejoicing in the sunlight of God's smile. Only in the crisis of a great emotion, as the conflicting elements of certain peculiar organizations are contending for the mastery come these marked phases of the human soul. To this order of minds Amelia belonged, but not Milly, who was more evenly balanced in her mental constitution.

It is doubtless a wise ordination that this rapt exaltation, this fulness of the soul's need, is not permitted to remain long, for then aspiration would be silenced. Neither exaltation nor depression is its normal state, but the crisis to note its progress,—the predominance of its strength or weakness. How often are we obliged to confront our faults again after we thought to have conquered them forever, yet each time rising with a more resolute purpose, learning that it is only by continued effort the soul gains the height where she can resist reacting influences, overcome every weakness and silence every doubt.

## *CHAPTER XI.*

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“Thought is deeper than all speech;  
Feeling deeper than all thought;  
Souls to souls can never teach  
What unto our souls is taught.”

“Oh, for the tongue of an angel,” soliloquized Milly one autumn afternoon when alone, as she supposed, but Kate was just within hearing.

“You little wicked minx to be covetin’ what you can’t have and what wouldn’t do you no good. ‘Spose you was an angel, what would it amount to? ‘Spose I should turn into one, for all the preachin’ there is about it, I guess they’d want me to turn into a sinner again and make ‘em somethin’ good to eat, for I couldn’t do that and be flyin’ up into heaven every minute. That’s the way with these folks that preach so much, they don’t do more’n other folks when it comes to practice, ‘cause they are always thinkin’ of some great thing that’s a goin’ to be done sometime, nobody knows when nor who’s a goin’ to do it.”

“I didn’t say I wished I was an angel, but that I had the tongue of an angel to give utterance to my thoughts and feelings, and I should be happier.”

“So you would, but I’m doubtful whether angels have tongues. That kind o’talk they have, I b’lieve, ain’t done by word of mouth. I’ll tell you what

makes me think of angels most of anything I know of, and that is soap suds. When I'm a washin' and the suds is a flyin', why it 'pears to me I could write poetry, there's somethin' so mighty inspirin' in 'em. All them little bubbles look so pure and white, it seems to me there must be an angel imprisoned in every one on 'em, and I want to let 'em out."

It is sometimes a rest and diversion to meet with a person so careless of the future and satisfied with the present in all its phases, especially when mingled with so much common sense as Kate displayed.

To Milly's weary brain it brought relief, the friction of the contact being just what she needed. Kate found enough to amuse her in the few sentences she had just written in the form of an essay, and submitted to her judgment as if she were a chosen friend to advise, instead of a thoughtless humorist.

"I always knew you'd turn into a parson or philosopher 'fore you got through. You are sentimental enough to write a whole budget of novels, but you ain't got the romance, or fun, or somethin' to carry it on with, such as knockin' a feller down for sport. You'd make it too sober. I'll warrant you'd have deaths enough in it to plant a seminary. You like fun as well as anybody when it's ready made for you, but you don't know how to make it. Now 'spose you and I should go in company, I'd make a hero out of Sykes, and you could make a dozen out of Miss Rosalind, and we'd smash up a great business under the firm of 'Milly & Kate, wholesale and retail book-makers.' It would be well enough to have a little moralizin' now and then by

way of spice. Read what you've been writin', maybe it'll do for one of Sykes' sermons. We'll have your book to start with, and the title of it shall be, 'The novel that never was written.' "

"Life is fragmentary"—

"Just as true as the Bible. All cut up into washin' and bakin', brewin' and mendin', and nothin' but the little odd bits and ends left to ourselves. Sometimes a spare minute to take a pinch o' snuff."

"Here and there a thought is struck off, clearly illustrating to our own minds the idea we would wish to present, but meeting the counter current of another soul"—

"That's just it exactly. When I lived at Syke's I went up garret one night after somethin' in the dark and was just thinkin' how nice it was not to have to light myself round as other folks do, when I stepped into a coal-hod on the stair, and down I come, coal and all, and such a racket you never did hear. It was right over the front stairs, and there was company in the parlor, and they come runnin' out, and one on'em said, 'The devil's in the house!' 'No he ain't,' says I, 'nothin' but his image. I stepped into a coal hod and fell down, that's what's the matter.' Sykes stretched up his long neck, and says he, 'did it hurt the hod?' When I was thinkin' what if I had broke my neck and its loss to the world, he was thinkin' how much the hod cost, as if that was the most consequence. Go on."

"A careless word or deed may inflict a wound on some sensitive soul that time can never heal, and a sympathizing look may lighten the sorrow of the

broken-hearted spirit that shall send it rejoicing on its way."

"That's true as the four gospels. I washed out my old apron once and hung it on a pile of wood in the back yard to dry, and thought nothin'. It was a bright, moony night, and pretty soon, Sykes, white as a ghost, come runnin' in, pantin' for breath. 'Why Sykes,' says I, 'what's the matter with you, you look like a scart owl.' 'Oh,' says he, 'I've seen a Jew without a head.' 'A Jew without a head,' says I, 'I never heard o' such a thing.' 'Well,' says he, 'I've heard on 'em, but I never see one afore, and I'm afraid he'll steal all our pork.' Now Sykes loved pork and beans.

"'Never you fear,' says I, 'I'll see that you always have pork enough.' An' he looked up so grateful to think he'd always have pork enough, but I see he was kind o' frightened and kept lookin' round as if he thought somethin' was after him, and so I thought I'd just look and see what it was that scart the poor fellow so. 'Mercy on us,' says I, 'that's an old maid's husband!' He stared open his big eyes, and says he, 'I thought old maids didn't have any husband!' jest as honest now as a Methodis' deacon."

"I wonder if you ever had a serious thought in your life."

"I guess if you'd had a broken foot as I have you'd not be askin' me that question. Walter, he undertook to talk to me but I got round him slick. When you was gone away last winter and I slipped on the ice hangin' out clothes, he was in the kitchen when I come in, and says I, 'Oh dear, I thought I was dead

when I started to get up, as much as ever I thought anything in the world.' 'No you didn't,' says he, 'how did you suppose you could stir if you were dead?' 'Why not,' says I, 'as well as for a hen to fly round after her head is cut off?' 'Didn't you want the priest sent for,' says he, 'to confess your sins, but I guess you wouldn't have cheated him, though he might have been glad of your money.' 'The priest,' says I, 'I could bite his head off, and he never'd know it.' 'Well,' says he, 'you needn't think you can ever deceive me, for I can always detect you.' Thinks I to myself, 'old feller, you'd better not be too sure. I'll make you take that back just as sure as I'm Kate Drummond, and you are an honest boy."

"How extravagant you are to call a little sprain a broken foot."

"None of your moralizin' now, let me tell my story. I wanted your help, but I couldn't have it, and so I took Amelia, and it did her a wonderful deal of good. She was quite waked up about it. You know Walter has a weak spot in the good side of his character. He could be very easily imposed upon by beggars, he's so afraid of turnin' off somebody that's needy, so I knew how I could work him. I jest borrowed an old gray wig and found a pair of spettacle bows without any eyes, and I jest pasted on some green paper and covered 'em with isinglass, so they looked jest like green glasses. I asked Mrs. Claremont's leave to go out that evenin', and you know she always lets me go when I want to, and Amelia was to tend the door. I got her to draw up

a paper representin' me as a deaf and dumb woman, and she was to take it to the family. I'd no thought when I asked her she'd be willin' to do it, but she fell right in with it. I guess she was glad of some-thin' for a change. So I rigged myself up in some old rags, and the wig and spettacles, and an old hood I've got laid away in the attic for such occasions, and knocked at the side door. Amelia opened it, and carried the paper into the parlor, and pretty soon come runnin' back, mighty tickled. Mr. Livingston was there and told her she'd better not leave me alone a great while. I 'spose he was afraid I should steal somethin'. Pretty soon Walter came out and then went back and got the rest. 'I believe I shall give her half a dollar,' says he, 'if she should be really sufferin' I never should forgive myself.'

Miss Rosalind was as moody as a broomstick, and didn't say a word to let a body know what she thought, but Mr. Livingston suspected me at first sight I know. There couldn't nobody deceive him. He took a lamp and come to hold it in my face, and then I thought I was gone for, but I turned from him and drew my tatters closer round me and heaved an involuntary sigh. 'Oh don't' says Walter, 'likely she's got some feelings left yet,' and he come and slipped the half dollar into my hand. I wanted to be so grateful for it that I started too quick and one of my isinglass eyes dropped out, and I put my hand up to my eyes to cover 'em so he wouldn't see it.

" 'It always seems as if such poor creatures couldn't express their gratitude enough,' says he, 'I don't believe they could be so deceitful as that.' I

wanted to laugh then, but I could have held in if it hadn't been for somethin' else. A big boy was goin' by under the window singin' out at the top of his voice, 'Pop goes the weasel,' when a little boy, passin' by at the same time, cried out still louder, 'Where did he pop to, I want to see him?' Then I couldn't help laughin', but as I had got the half dollar I didn't care. But you never did see anybody so cut up as Walter, when he found he was the only dupe there was. At first he thought Amelia was as ignorant as him,—and she played another trick on him. I reckon he always thought she wans't very smart, and as for that may be all the rest on us thought so too, but I tell you, I guess Amelia knows more'n we was thinkin' for. He looked right straight at her in the eye, and says he, 'Amelia, did you know that was Kate?' And she looked right straight at him in the eye, and says she, 'Kate, is that Kate! Isn't she really a deaf and dumb woman?' just as innocent now as if she just come from among angels. He was staggered then, he didn't know what to make of it. I heard 'em talkin' a long time in the parlor about it. He thought it was wrong to impose on a body's sensibilities so 'cause it harden's 'em to real sufferin'. That's true I 'spose, but I wan't goin' to be cheated out of my fun. Mr. Livingston told him a good many anecdotes of how the beggin' classes in Europe grow rich in this way that he had seen. I 'spose that's the reason he couldn't be cheated."

"Mr Livingston has been about the world too much to be easily deceived. I guess he would prove a match for you anytime."

"A match for me! ha, I'd like to serve a joke on him fust rate. But he ain't one o' these familiar sort o' folks that you don't mind speakin' to any time. I always feel as if I must stand on ceremony when I'm speakin' to him."

"I am glad if there is anybody you stand in deference to. It's a pity you couldn't be in awe of him all the time, and be brought into some kind of system."

"I hope you don't think I'm afraid of him. With eyes as gentle as a purrin' cat's, he makes a body feel when he's lookin' at 'em so kind o' soft and tender that they don't want to use any rough words. But I'd like to have him try his hand on me to bring me into system, wouldn't I have a gay time."

"No danger of his trying. He knows it would be a hopeless task."

"I 'spose you think I'm too awfully depraved to have any hopes of. It tickles me to see these folks that pretend to be saints, when I guess if they could show their 'count books they'd find some as big sins set down agin 'em as ever I did. Why there's your aunt, I know all about her for I lived next house to her 'fore you ever see her, and I think you must have been pretty near a saint to live with her as you did, she was a perfect torment to her husband and he was ditto, and so that wan't no matter. Now seein' you like to puzzle over such things, which do you think is most christian like, to take this world fat and easy as I do, and the next world for all the good we can get out of it; or, I don't know much about what's in the Bible, but I believe there's a sort

of a story there that described her, about makin' broad prayers and long faces while their hearts are far off; pray like a hypocrite, and fret like a scold?"

"Don't go to raking that up, let it be dead and buried. I don't like to think of it."

"You don't get rid o' me that way. What's all your thinkin' goin' to amount to if you can't answer a simple question? Now I know which I should rather do. I'd rather take my chance of gettin' to heaven through a bright sunshiny track right straight ahead than to go up a dark lane full of sour faces and wry tempers, the scapegoat of a multitude of sins."

"You talk as if every body was of that class because you happen to know of one."

"Happen to know of one! I could name a hundred. There's Mrs. Greenwood, a very saint as the world goes, snappin' at every innocent frolic a child has, and wantin' to harness a cross on to 'em as soon as they can run alone, so as to save 'em from purgatory I 'spose, but I'd go there first."

"Well, I know she doesn't understand children's nature at all, and so far as that goes, very few people do. They seem to forget that they have been children, whose wants and wills should be regarded as much as grown people's. I do not believe there is a class wronged more than they are."

"Now you begin to talk sense. But when you go to smoothin' over everything that's done under long-faced professions you don't do right, Milly."

"I don't try to smooth it over. You go into such extravagant phrases it is of no use to try to talk or

reason with you. I always stood up for children because it is in their training this fretfulness begins. If parents were always pleasant to each other, as well as to every member of the family, their children would catch the same spirit, instead of growing up in this fretful way of speaking, a habit it is hard to get out of, when really no ill is meant by it."

"Ah, you hypocrite! What good is all your prayin' and preachin' goin' to do if a body ain't no better for it? Now you see it's this forcein' natur' out of her course in not lettin' the little ones enjoy themselves 'cause it's good for 'em to be crossed, that makes 'em so sour when they get well broke in."

"It will do very well for you to talk, Kate, who never had any experience. Perhaps if you had half a dozen children to take care of they would sometimes be crossed when they ought not to be, and you might lose your temper occasionally. That would not make it right, to be sure, but it shows how much easier it is to preach than to practice."

"Any body'd think you'd had as many children as the old woman that lived in a shoe to hear you talk, as if you knew all about 'em. I want talkin' about myself who don't pretend to be anything but an old sinner, I want you to tell me wherein good folks differ from bad ones."

"What a question! Your own observation ought to tell you that."

"So it does to my way of thinkin'. I've tried all the afternoon to get your notion about it, and ain't no wiser now than I was when I begun. I 'spose

when you get that tongue you wanted, you'll tell me."

"It don't make any difference whether I tell you or not, you'll be just as light-headed. I should have to go over so much ground to do justice to both sides you'd have no patience to hear me half through."

"That's a fact. You'd have to begin at Genesis and explain how it happened that Cain killed his brother without being so wicked as to do it."

"When a person becomes so perverted as Cain was, I admit that the sin committed assumes a very different character in his eyes from what it appears to one who is pure and innocent. Stop Kate, hear me through. I am not defending him, I only say that if Cain and Abel were so different naturally, it is unfair to expect one would be just as good as the other with the same effort. So it is in all other cases."

"I'm for havin' good folks better'n bad ones. That's necessary for society to stand on. Knock out that underpinnin' and what comes 'on us all ? "

"I never supposed you cared whether it stood up or fell down."

"I guess you'd find 'twould fall down pretty quick if there wan't no such folks as me to hold it up. There never'll any good come of your writin', and more'n all that you'll burn it all up when you get it done.

"I have a chapter here on that subject, called the 'Philosophy of Writing.' It gives a few of the reasons why some people think so much more than others."

"Common sense could tell that, because they do nothin' but dream as you do, spinnin' cobwebs that I have to keep brushin' down."

"The world suffers for no lack of books ; and as the motive spring is oftener the need of the writer to express his thoughts and develope himself thus, than of the world for the knowledge so communicated, possibly he who withholds his works from publication may be the greatest benefactor of the two, since he must incorporate his ideas into his own practical life in order to answer that great want of his soul which another supplies by the response of some other soul to this vibrating chord of human sympathy, which in its sweetness dispels that intense earnestness whereby its unuttered aspirations carve out some noble action as the expression of its ideal. In these two classes may be embraced the whole world."

"That's the biggest whopper that ever was told."

"Why ? "

"You've made it out that the whole world writes, and I never writ a word in my life. I don't think you know yourself what you tried to make out there."

"I guess I did not word that just as I meant to have it understood, but let me read the next and see if it does not explain it. That last sentence did not belong there ; it ought to have been placed after the next paragraph."

"That's what I call turnin' round in a pint dish. You try to get off somethin' that'll make a great flourish, and when you get through you are just where you was when you begun, not a bit bigger place to turn round in."

" You must hear the next, and you'll see what I meant. 'One represents the literary class, the thinkers, people who seek a law for every event and a principle for every act, thus separating themselves from the masses, the people of action, who go forward to perform whatever their hands find to do without any settled law or principle to guide them. Yet these last have the dim outlines of some undefined emotion which language fails them to express, but to which they can readily respond when clearly represented by the former class. So one acts as a supplement to the other.' "

" There now, stop there, and don't go to gettin' off any more big words. The trouble with you is that when you've said somethin' sensible you spile it all by goin' into somethin' you don't know nothin' about, and that the king of England nor his court fool couldn't understand. What you said there last is just my sentiments, that these folks that think so much and pretend to be so knowin' ain't the ones that does the work. And just as you said, them that does the work know just as much after all only they don't know how to express it. Now you see that first big sentence you got off wa'nt clear ; but its most tea time, and I must leave you to your destruction, only don't set the house a fire with your novel, cause we shall want somewhere to stay, and can't turn into angels and fly away as you want to."

Milly looked out at her window upon the meadows where the cattle were grazing in quiet content, and the misty shadows were resting on the hill-sides, she listened to the song of the birds and inhaled the fra-

grance of the lilac as the gentle breeze bore it upward, then crossed her hands upon the window sill and laid her head upon them. Angels came and blessed her, and her spirit turned with yearning toward that beatified state where self is known no more, and the higher language of the soul shall make itself understood without the feeble power of human lips to give it utterance.

It was the overshadowing of the divine Presence coming to minister to that humble one meekly bowing before His throne, and impart knowledge for which she thirsted, but which tongue could never express.

She was one of those of whom it is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." A priestess in his temple, He revealed himself to her as a just and upright judge, full of mercy and love, from whom the most guilty need not shrink if they come in penitence and prayer, and to whom the righteous can come only as they acknowledge the need of the injunction, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

Lapsing into a state of half unconsciousness the outward world glided from her senses, and Mrs. Claremont, missing her from the place she was accustomed to fill, an event of rare occurrence, went to her chamber, and laying her hand gently on her shoulder, was met with a warm embrace as Milly raised her hands involuntarily ere consciousness returned, and whispered, "Mother!"

## **CHAPTER XII.**

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“This world is full of beauty, like other worlds above;  
And, if we did our duty, it might be full of love.”

Thanksgiving came round again, being the second anniversary of Mr. Claremont’s death. Rosalind had been more cheery of late, and since the walk in the woods where we left her, she had treated Mr. Livingston with more courtesy, but still was very far from being on familiar terms with him. This day, which was spent in a very quiet manner, he was their guest. A sudden change in the weather took place the night before, and a violent northeast snow-storm set in, which continued till late in the afternoon, when the wind suddenly changed again, and the evening was very clear and cold. Rosalind was suffering from a severe cold which combined with the storm to make her feel more gloomy than usual.

In the evening, as the family were pleasantly chatting around the festive board after having done full justice to its contents, they were startled by a rapid knock at the side door. “Will somebody please come and help us, for mother is dying and father is crazy, and the fire’s gone out, and what will become of poor little sissy and me?” came in hurried tones from a ragged, but intelligent looking boy of eight or ten years, whose eager importunity was not to be resisted

by a woman of Mrs. Claremont's benevolent impulses, and she ordered her carriage to accompany him home escorted by Walter, greatly to the joy of the little intruder, being sure now, he said, that mother would live, when he saw the little articles of comfort Kate deposited in the carriage.

Rosalind followed them to the door, and watched them down the avenue as they glided over the unbroken crust beneath the merry twinkling of the stars which shine with such brilliancy on a clear, frosty night. She closed the door with a shiver and returned to the parlor. Resting her elbow on the mantel and her head upon her hand she looked thoughtfully into the grate for some minutes, and then broke the silence by saying, "There is very little in life worth living for."

Earnest looked at her with wonder as he replied, "That is a singular remark for you to make, surrounded as you are by all that wealth or affection can bestow."

"I was not referring to myself particularly, I was thinking of that little boy who will soon be left, perhaps, without a friend in the world, and be obliged to get his living as a street beggar."

"You would still be his friend would you not? Your mother's visit there to-night may be the source of joy that will atone for hours of bitter suffering. The elastic nature of childhood cannot long be repressed."

"That is true, but when grown to manhood the majority of people have to suffer far more than they enjoy, and this world must lose its attractions."

"Perhaps they would not tell you so if you were to ask the question. There is a joy for those who weep as well as for those who smile. Do you not think afflictions are exalting in their character?"

"Yes, but that does not make us covet or even endure them willingly."

"Did you never, when a child, have to submit to what seemed to you a great trial and privation at the time, but which in the end was of incalculable benefit to you, either for your own improvement, or for the tender proof it gave you of your parents' untiring love?"

Rosalind cared not to pursue the theme farther, and she seated herself in a chair with her face turned from him without answering.

He saw that he had touched the wrong key, and he too was silent, meanwhile studying her attentively until her mother's return.

Walter brought in a golden haired girl of three years whom he placed in Rosalind's lap, saying she must adopt her as her name-sake, her name being Rosie, and having blue eyes resembling her own. The only attendant her mother had when Mrs. Claremont arrived there, she was standing by the bedside affectionately stroking her face, as if that were all that was needed to restore her to consciousness. The father, it seemed, had come home in a fit of *delirium tremens*, and his wife, being in delicate health, had fallen into a swoon. After taking the proper measures to remove him to the almshouse, where he died soon after, Mrs. Claremont took home the little girl

for a few days, until her mother should recover her usual health.

"Would you like to come and live with the lady?" said Walter to her as she surveyed them all with eager curiosity, seated in Rosalind's lap.

"No, dess not, mama 'll want her 'ittle dirl," lisped the little one.

"What would you do if you should lose your mother? Who would feed and take care of you," asked Ernest as she bent forward to grasp his watch key.

"Mama says he who takes care of the 'avens when they ky, will feed me too."

"What do you have to play with at home, dolls and toys?"

"I'se dot a 'ittle pussy."

"What do you give her to eat?"

"We don't have anything to dive her to eat, she catches her own meat."

Saying this she jumped down to look at the pictures and other curiosities that met her eyes, appearing as much at home as if reared in a palace. She gained their affections so much that it was with great reluctance they parted with her, and Mrs. Claremont would gladly have kept her, if for no other reason than to awaken the interest of Rosalind in some object, who manifested much of her old enthusiasm in replenishing her scant wardrobe and listening to her childish prattle.

This was only one of many instances of a similar character that came under Mrs. Claremont's observation during that winter. There was a great deal of

suffering among the poorer classes, arising from a scarcity of employment and the high prices of provisions, but more than all from the increasing vice of intemperance.

Even women sometimes partook freely of the intoxicating draught which their husbands were much more lavish to provide than food, and which often served as a stimulus to take its place. These were exceptional cases, however, as there were comparatively few women so lost to all sense of duty as mothers to debase themselves thus.

Pinched by cold and hunger, and tortured by abuse, it was marvelous that they had the ambition to try to appear respectable, and the perseverance to labor so untiringly to guard their children against the ill effects of the vices their fathers taught them.

Thus Rosalind thought who often accompanied her mother to these abodes of wretchedness and poverty, but whose mind was not in a state to be profited thereby, and Mrs. Claremont ceased at length to take her with her, fearing to increase her morbid tendency to dwell on the dark side.

Among those associated with Mrs. Claremont in this work, was a young lady whose overflowing zeal in all those tender charities that constitute such a charm in budding womanhood cast a beneficent halo around her presence in every circle, and commanded the respect of the most thoughtless by her unaffected interest in the lowly and unfortunate. As beautiful in person as she was lovely in character, she might have been envied as a rival but for the entire absence of self consciousness and the unobtrusive manners

and sprightly conversation which won all hearts. The self reliance that imparted such graceful mien and dignified bearing bore no trace of self-conceit, and the ease with which she mingled with all classes left no room for the disaffection of any.

Walter would have been exceedingly gratified to see a friendship springing up between her and Rosalind, thinking it might prove beneficial to the latter besides getting her interested in something that would employ her mind profitably. With great regret he observed her apathy, and the inutility of every effort to arouse her from it. As the time was drawing near when he was to leave home for college, she was a source of great anxiety. Never having been separated he feared she would become still more exclusive when deprived of his influence and society. Though little disposed to talk upon the subject he could see that the thought of the separation already depressed her spirits.

Another member of the Benevolent Association, without which no city can be perfect, was Mrs. Frizzlewit. She formed a sort of connecting link between high and low, rich and poor, an indispensable element in the successful prosecution of an enterprise of this character. She and Grace Blanche were opposites in every thing, yet both filled their respective places, and, by being united, universal harmony prevailed, for no one would have the presumption to hazard the alienation of the queenly Miss Blanche. Youth and beauty, it is useless to deny, wield a sovereignty far more potent than their subjects dream, and when

with these are combined true nobility and greatness of soul; the possessor reigns absolute.

A very brisk, blithe, dapper little body was this Mrs. Frizzlewit, just the woman for her place. If she ever did make a mistake, it was in getting married, evidently not being fitted for that. Household cares pressed heavily upon her, and it was sometimes whispered that her home was not happy, but it was only a rumor.

If sometimes fretful it was because she had mistaken her mission, and instead of going from house to house, and from shop to shop to enlist sympathy and help for some unfortunate family, a task for which nature had fitted her, she was obliged to attend to menial duties at home, uncongenial to her tastes and inclination. Not that she did not love her family, but was animated by a ruling passion for helping others. Had she been able to hire servants this difficulty would have been obviated in a great degree. Her husband was poor and the whole care of the children devolved upon her. However, she always managed to take a prominent part in any benevolent object that sprung up, when others were pressed for time, and filled such a useful nook that no one could think of sparing her. Never baffled by repulse, most any disagreeable task others shunned found a ready instrument in her.

Many were the heartfelt thanks arising from miserable hovels for cheering smiles and kindly words, aside from the more substantial assistance given by those two sisters of mercy, Mrs. Claremont and her

young friend, aided by many others among their social circles.

Young men caught their enthusiastic spirit, and gave liberally of their means, vieing with each other who should win the most approving smile of the lovely Miss Blanche. Although she cared not for their obsequious favors farther than for the good they enabled her to accomplish, it was an Elysian field she trod, in which she saw only the bright side of life gilded with youth's romantic dreams; for the sufferings it gave her so much joy to alleviate had never formed a part of her cup, and how could they throw a shadow across her path?

## **CHAPTER XIII.**

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“We endow  
Those whom we love, in our fond, passionate blindness,  
With power upon our souls too absolute  
To be a mortal's trust.”

Among the many admirers of Grace Blanche was Mr. Carleton, a man of middle age, and a Southerner by birth and education. His residence for the last ten years in different parts of the North had obliterated every trace of his southern breeding. An accomplished gentleman in the popular sense of the term, his shrewdness of wit and unaffected gallantry won his way to the most select circles, and few ladies could resist the peculiar charm of his conversation.

He had a soul, tender, refined and affectionate, and also strong animal passions which gained the ascendancy when beyond the restraints which female society threw around him. His real character could not escape detection from such a practised student of human nature as Ernest Livingston, who felt a brother's interest in Miss Blanche, her wealth in addition to rare charms of mind and person being a source of temptation to others, and he volunteered many words of counsel and caution which were always accepted in the spirit in which they were given.

She was the youngest child of her father who doted upon her, and made her an heiress to most of his

wealth, to the exclusion of his other children, which alienated their affections and left her comparatively alone. She had a step-mother, a very inefficient woman, who never exerted an influence anywhere, and whose experience in the world was of little worth to any one.

Mr. Carleton's eye was ever on the alert, and no sooner did he perceive the fascinations, riches and beauty had in store, than he began to devise some measure which should chime in with the drift of her feelings, to secure his grasp to such a treasure, and adroitly commenced his work. Without appearing to manifest any particular interest in her he assumed a mock spirit of philanthropy, and not only gave freely of his means, but discussed the causes and prevention of pauperism with an ability and zeal that could not fail to gain the sympathy and approbation of his hearers, and finally succeeded in winning the public confidence to such a degree that he filled some of the highest offices of trust and honor in the city.

He could allude to the victims of misfortune in terms of charity that would draw tears to all eyes, and plead for the innocence of childhood and the chastity of woman in strains of eloquence that would send the burning tinge of shame to the most gloating sensualist, or the most hardened trafficker in that which robs a man of his reason and affections. His praise was in every mouth and his smile courted in every corner. No uninterested observer of his rising fame was Grace Blanche, the more interested because of his indifference, showing no sign of vanity at his

sudden elevation, nor ambition to seek higher honors. What she deemed most noble he appeared to be.

Mr. Livingston could not overcome his natural aversion to the man, neither did Mr. Carleton feel quite easy at the intimacy existing between him and Miss Blanche, but he was wary of his opportunities and in the most nonchalant manner discussed with her, when they met, plans that he knew would meet her approbation.

He watched her kindling eye and repressed enthusiasm with suppressed emotion, never for a moment betraying the concealed purpose of his soul. Imperceptibly her life glided into a fairy dream where all sense of beauty and promptings of duty were so magically blended that the roses which bloomed in her pathway were divested of their thorns, ever winning the purest homage given to girlish innocence and true womanly charms. A May day Festival was held on the Scripture plan of inviting the poor and the unfortunate, which originated with these devoted ladies who, during the previous six months, had labored so assiduously in their behalf. Speeches were made of the usual complimentary character, but foremost among them all for its disinterestedness and graphic flights of eloquence was that of Mr. Carleton. It was an ambrosial treat to Grace Blanche whose artistic taste for all that was beautiful lent her a keen appreciation of the divine gift of oratory. She had yet to learn that it, no less than music, may be bestowed upon the voluptuary as well as the saint.

He watched the rapture with which she hung upon his lips, and measured the probabilities of the present

moment for future success. He knew well the evanescent nature of such sudden popularity, and his own inability to sustain the character he had won, when his fame should be trumpeted to other places where better known. Besides, the mask assumed was beginning to be burdensome and he longed for his old freedom from restraint. Only the evening before he had been traced to a place of doubtful fame by one who had long been suspicious of his real character, and the information was communicated to Mr. Livingston. Being one of the assembly, it was with ill concealed grace the latter listened to his hypocritical dashes of rhetoric. The two measured each other's glances as they met in the neighborhood of Miss Blanche. They read each other's souls, and she read their antagonism.

At this juncture Mrs. Frizzlewit fortunately made her appearance and relieved all parties from their embarrassment. Mr. Carleton was about to turn away somewhat disconcerted at the moment he hoped to win, but not in the least disheartened. Miss Blanche could not doubt the real, confiding friendship of the one and she dared not insult it by bestowing on the other those approving smiles prompted by the occasion and the lingering breath of his own words, which, with that delicate tact a woman so readily understands, she knew he would appreciate more than popular applause. He read her soul, being as quick an adept in the science of human nature as Mr. Livingston.

"Mr. Carleton," said the little black-eyed woman whose hair suggested the appropriateness of her

name, "will you give me ten dollars for a poor widow whose husband was killed at the great fire last winter ? She wishes to build a house for herself and children, towards which I have already obtained a large sum, and here is a list of the donors if you wish to see them ; Mr. Perriwinkle, Mr. Guzthorp."

"Oh, never mind the names, here is your money, and may God bless you for all the good deeds you are doing, as he certainly will. Such disinterested beneficence never goes unrewarded," blandly replied Mr. Carleton, fixing his eyes on Miss Blanche with their most fascinating expression. The little black eyes sparkled as they turned towards Mr. Livingston, only to meet a courteous refusal. Mr. Carleton observing it walked away with her to a neighboring group where some half dozen ladies and gentlemen were discussing a dandy frolic that took place the evening before, which resulted in the conflagration of one of the finest buildings in the city. One of the company passing through a hall where repairs were being made, heedlessly tossed his lighted segar among the shavings scattered on the floor, which was observed by others following, but whose inordinate exhilaration prevented them from noting the consequences, until they saw the flames bursting from the roof a few hours after.

" You are just the ones I want to see," said Mrs. Frizzlewit, her curls shaking with enthusiasm. " Mr. Carleton here has just given me ten dollars for some sufferers by fire, and I am sure that you will give me as much more."

There was no need now to adduce the other names,

the one just mentioned being sufficient to carry all the weight influence could produce. One of the group stepped back thinking to avoid a direct collision, but the piercing black eyes were upon him.

"I am sure you will not refuse me," she said, "if you cannot give so much, every little helps you know," laying her hand on his arm. He gave her a dollar, thinking himself well off to escape so. From the whole group she collected the ten dollars asked for, and straightway sallied to another circle seated near the speaker's stand.

They would gladly have made their egress, not from lack of sympathy or avaricious motives, but from the disagreeable sensation of being continually importuned for money, and a secret desire to be for once present at any place secure from the intrusion of the bustling Mrs. Frizzlewit.

"It is well for the world there are people in it like Mrs. Frizzlewit, but begging may become a passion like any other pursuit," observed Mr. Livingston to Miss Blanche, as soon as the subject of his remark was beyond hearing.

"True," replied she, "but you cannot say of it what you can of most any other pursuit, that it will ever incite to rivalry for the sake of its monopoly."

"Not much danger of that certainly, and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

"I often think so. The raising of money for any object is generally the most disagreeable as well as the hardest part of the work. I have the highest regard for Mrs. Frizzlewit on that account, and appreciate her services accordingly. No one ever excited

less enmity in proportion to her activity and zeal, for you probably know how prone the world is to attribute selfish motives to a person who displays the perseverance really essential for the prosecution of a disinterested act. She does not seem to care for it if they do, and goes from one to another with as much ease as if she were their agent."

"Doubtless she considers herself so. It probably does not occur to her that others may lack her feeling of interest, or that there is just as much reason why her family should have a house of their own as the woman she is begging for. I think she has earned one for her disinterested efforts in helping others, and I would gladly give ten dollars for that purpose."

"Probably she would object to that. She does not appear to think of herself or her own comfort at all, unless this business is so agreeable to her that it is her greatest comfort."

"I think it is so. It does not prove because she is so forward that her sympathies are really quicker than those of many others, only a remarkable gift in that direction, and I am glad to see her improve it. At the same time I do not feel any more obligation to give, perhaps less, when I know how large a proportion of the money thus given does not proceed from pure benevolence, but from a desire to please and be thought public-spirited and generous-hearted. I admire that passage of scripture, 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.' Do not understand me as casting any reflections on Mrs. Frizlewit. Doubtless she would give you the same

opinion if at liberty to express her honest sentiments, but the money does just as much good given from whatever motive it may be, although not equally blessed to the donor."

"Do you not think it was generous in Mr. Carleton to give that ten dollars so freely?"

"That depends on his motive in doing it. Had I more confidence in the man I should be more ready to give him credit for his acts. As it is, I attribute them to the basest hypocrisy."

He said this unconscious of the sting inflicted by his words upon the tenderest emotions of Grace Blanche. Although realizing Mr. Carleton's motives he had not suspected the nature of her feelings towards him, and was glad to throw out these hints as a warning. Neither was she fully conscious before how much she had yielded to the strength of his influence, nor how essential to her happiness his presence had become. Having too much confidence in Mr. Livingston as a friend, and in his judgment as a man, to suspect him of prejudice or envy, these words assumed the character of an oracle, the certainty of which she never thought of questioning, predicting the impending doom of being compelled to witness the disenthronement of her idol from its place in her affections.

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At twenty, when youth paints all nature in her roseate hues there is no seeming, lending a pleasant reality, which leaves no disposition to doubt its genuineness. At forty, the gilding is fallen off, shams are detected, and the experience of the intervening

twenty years has fortified us to bear unnerved the disappointments of the greatest expectations. Then, if our confidence has been misplaced, it only furnishes another example of the fickleness of human integrity to which we have become accustomed, and the world undergoes no especial change in our eyes. But it is not thus when the young imagination finds for the first time that things are not what they seem. When the veneering drops off, the sight is ugly in the extreme, and the sensation a chilling one.

It is almost as if a portion of our own souls is taken from us and the void filled by painful illusions. Then for a time skepticism of all men's motives prevails, and we look around in vain for some one to trust. Sometimes in desperation all faith in human goodness is cast off, and the high resolves with which we had started to make it felt as a power for the accomplishment of some noble purpose are bitterly cast aside as a vain delusion.

When in the solemn and mysterious hour of dissolution immortality claims its own, and we are permitted to look only on what is mortal of a departed friend, whose glazed eyes and rigid lips are forever sealed to the gushings of our sympathies or the loving impulses of our affections, it is little we know of the deepest pathos in life, the most sacred sorrow, when the world closes like a desolate tomb around us, as we waken to the delusion that all the fair visions of joy and happiness, love and devotion, that have risen before us like some enchanted garden are but deceitful shadows, and they to whom we have looked up in reverence,—around whom our affections have

twined like the tendrils of the vine around the oak for sympathy and support, have suddenly shaken us from their embrace, and stand before us divested of every superhuman virtue with which our fond imagination had invested them. Then comes no seraphic vision of future bliss when those joys that have died to us on earth shall rise again in immortal bloom in the perennial garden of heavenly verdure, but, like blasted copse or blighted heather no trace of life or sign of vegetation appears to revive the drooping spirit. Let such derive consolation from the following words of a celebrated writer, words that go so deep into the inner sanctuary of the soul and reveal so much of the real poetry of the heart-life that they cannot be too often repeated.

" If ever you have had a romantic, uncalculating friendship,—a boundless worship and belief in some hero of your soul,—if ever you have so loved, that all cold prudence, all selfish considerations have gone down like drift-wood before a river flooded with new rain from heaven, so that you even forgot yourself, and were ready to cast your whole being into the chasm of existence, as an offering before the feet of another, and all for nothing,—if you awoke bitterly betrayed and deceived, still give thanks to God that you have had one glimpse of heaven. The door now shut will open again. Rejoice that the noblest capability of your eternal inheritance has been made known to you ; treasure it, as the highest honor of your being, that ever you could so feel,—that so divine a guest ever possessed your soul. By such experiences are we taught the pathos, the sacredness

of life ; and if we use them wisely, our eyes will ever after be animated to see what poems, what romances, what sublime tragedies lie around us in the daily walk of life, ‘written not with ink, but in fleshy tables of the heart.’ The dullest street of the most prosaic town has matter in it for more smiles, more tears, more intense excitement, than ever were written in story or sung in poem ; the reality is there, of which the romancer is the second-hand recorder.”

## **CHAPTER XIV.**

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“ The blue  
Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew  
Of summer night collected still to make  
The morning precious: Beauty was awake!  
Why were ye not awake?”

What is it Rosa, makes thy eye so bright, and thy step so light? Has some ministering spirit been whispering to thy troubled soul some sweet message of peace and love? Ah yes, it is even so, but be not too sanguine Rosalind; perhaps it is only the delusive calm that precedes a still greater struggle, and it may be,—the last.

Who that has trod the mourner’s path, has not felt gleams of God’s own sunlight bursting through some overcharged cloud of despondency and despair, as if to reveal a glimpse of the blessed future beyond, and nerve the soul for a sterner conflict?

Such was the experience of Rosalind, as she rose early one lovely June morning and sauntered down the shaded avenue to the gate, which commanded a full view of the Connecticut sporting with the sun-beams.

The sky was cloudless, the air soft and breezy, the birds caroled their joyous notes from the tree-tops overhead, and she looked upward to that far off world whither her father had gone, when distance

was annihilated, and it seemed to have suddenly come down to her. She slowly retraced her steps, catching a glimpse, now and then, of the graceful curve of the fountain spray through the openings of the trees on either side, and stopped at a flower bed in front of the house laid out in the form of a circle, which had been preserved with scrupulous care in the exact style originally designed by her father. It comprised some of the rarest plants of the season, now in luxuriant bloom; and, glistening in their tear-drops of dew she thought they never looked half so beautiful before.

She stooped lovingly down to fondle them, as she had done in years gone by, when she pointed out triumphantly to her father some new law she had discovered relative to their organization and growth. While thus engaged, Ernest came up the walk, bringing her his hands full of pond lilies he had that morning gathered. She was dressed in a simple white morning wrapper with no ornament whatever, and the glossy ringlet which had received more than its usual care, looked glossier than ever, as, disengaging itself from the others, it gently swayed in the shining rays of the morning sun.

He had never seen her in one of those trance-like states necessary to display her spiritual beauty, when she was so much at peace with herself and all the world that nothing could disturb her serenity. She was not communicative at such times, the communings of her thoughts being of a character too intensely spiritual to be symbolized in human language. Ernest

was well pleased with this, being more accustomed to reading the language of the soul in the lineaments of the face than in the utterances of the lips.

He conceived the happy thought of painting her portrait in the act of taking the pond lilies. "What can be more beautiful," said he to himself.

He returned to his rooms, and, immediately after breakfast set about the pleasant task, putting aside his other sketches, and worked at it incessantly for three days, making the most rapid progress. He wished her to know nothing of it until its completion when he intended to surprise her with it as a present.

There is a delicious sense of rapture in being the sole repository of one's own secret. Even if another is to share it before it can become a reality, there may be a kind of cruel pleasure in feeling that that one is yet in innocent ignorance of the fact. Ernest had reached that point when anticipation included the reality just enough to lend enchantment to every object of the physical sense as well as the diviner feelings. Nature spoke to him more kindly than before, and the subtle influence of a kindred soul, though unacknowledged, softened into beauty every rugged outline of her coloring.

The next day he was invited to join a party of young people in an evening stroll, where he fell in company with Grace Blanche. The close affinity of tastes between them always brought them together when both were present, which produced sufficient occasion among all who were given to gossip and some who were not, to link their fates together. It

is useless to censure the public for it's interest in all affairs of this kind, being just as natural as to breathe in the fresh morning air. As they were deeply engaged in conversation the rest of the party withdrew, leaving them unconsciously to tread a path by themselves. When Ernest observed it he smiled at their conceited knowledge, but was entirely satisfied with the position assigned to him. Rosalind was not invited, having lived a very secluded life since her father's death, and Miss Blanche filled her place better than any one else could. But of what was he dreaming ? Why was Rosalind so closely associated with his deepest thoughts ? She had not even given one token of regard for him. It was the instinctive trusting nature of love, which could afford to wait and be patient.

Grace Blanche felt lonely and sad, more so than he knew of, and the peculiar turn of his conversation which sometimes touched upon themes extending beyond this world soothed and consoled her. It might have been dangerous to her happiness ultimately, to form such an intimate friendship at this particular time.

Especially is this true of ordinary minds, but Grace Blanche had too much sense and strength of character for that, or to continue the acquaintance of a gentleman who was open to suspicion like Mr. Carleton. Much as he had won her affections, she was not so blinded as to discard wise counsel concerning him without giving it sufficient consideration. Her own judgment warranted the conclusion ar-

rived at by others, that it is possible for vice to assume the garb of virtue, and resolutely she determined to oppose the current of her feelings. Most opportune came this brief interview with Mr. Livingston to strengthen her in this decision, and with the most friendly feelings, but none other, they separated.

## **CHAPTER XV.**

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“Thy path like most by mortals trod,  
Will have its thorns and flowers,  
Its stony steps, its velvet sod,  
Its sunshine and its showers.”

A rather eccentric genius was at this time associated with Kate in the kitchen department, upon whom she now vented her fun-loving propensity.

Aunt Polly as she was called, had been grievously disappointed in her young days, and, not lavishly endowed with amiability of temper before, grew sour and morose. She seemed to cherish eternal hatred to the whole race of mankind, except a distant relative who had been the Governor of a state; upon which fact she prided herself. She sought refuge under it for every imaginary insult, which was quickly resented with the remark, “Ain’t I a cousin of the Governor?” This furnished great amusement to Kate who missed no opportunity of provoking her to it. Aunt Polly could not help liking her, although the source of constant vexation. Kate’s kindness of heart did not fail to flow towards her, which, in a measure, atoned for the many jokes she played upon her, so that on the whole they got on very well together. No one could ever quarrel with Kate. She had too much sunny humor to prolong angry feelings, if she did excite them.

There came one of those uncomfortable, chilly mornings, accompanied by a drizzling rain, when it seems as if the earth, half repenting herself of the blessings she is about to confer on an expectant world, sullenly retires behind a cloud to evade the sun's quickening rays. A plan that had been laid out for that day's work, requiring fair weather, was consequently defeated, so that it was comparatively a day of leisure, and Kate must have her fun. As she was clearing away the breakfast, singing a snatch of a love song, she said abruptly, "Come Aunt Polly, tell us some o' your experience in courtin', I love to hear old maids tell over their love stories." Her eyes darted fire as she retorted, "Don't you know no better n' to insult me in that way, and I a cousin of the Governor?"

Kate replied in her usual merry tone, "Oh Aunt Polly, don't be so snappish, may be the Governor'll come to see you to-day, nothin' strange, and you'll want to be in a pretty good mood. Wish I was cousin to the Governor, I'd make him give me a good fat office, an' I'd fare like a pig in the clover."

She had a great passion for stuffed figures. Having among her possessions an old mask, a hideous looking thing, which she fitted to quite an imposing looking figure, shaped of various articles, pillows and bed-clothing collected from the attic, duly attired, she placed it in the dining-room, and told Aunt Polly a gentleman wished to see her.

"Who can it be," said she, "may be 'tis the Governor. I allers kind o' thought he'd be lookin' of me

up, if he should ever hear of me, but I must put on 'tother cap, and a clean apron."

"He looks as if he might be a Governor or somebody," quietly replied Kate.

Aunt Polly hastened up stairs, put on her 'tother cap with its capacious frill, and, smoothing the folds of her clean checked apron, she opened the door into the dining room, when, lo and behold! instead of the courteous smile of the Governor, she was met by this horrid, grinning figure, with its great glaring eyes, and mouth distended from ear to ear. Mortified and vexed beyond measure, she beat a rapid retreat into the kitchen, but Kate had shut herself into the pantry convulsed with laughter, and she was obliged to defer giving vent to her ill-concealed wrath until a more convenient season. At this moment Rosalind entered, having just returned from a short walk.

Meanwhile a great change had come over her feelings. Another wave of anguish had burst upon her, well nigh sweeping away the little oasis which so greatly refreshed her in her desert wanderings. Having gone out, as she often did, to shake off her melancholy feelings, she this morning returned with seven spirits bluer than herself. In reply to something Aunt Polly muttered to her, which was not very agreeable in her present state of mind, she did not speak with her usual courteous tone,—at least, so it seemed to Aunt Polly's disturbed temper.

"Ye needn't feel so pert this mornin', Miss Rosa, and as for that Mr. Livingston ye never'll catch him, that's what ye won't. He's a courtin' or flirtin', I don't know which, with that Miss Blanche, but lor,

he won't have none on ye, and if ye do I guess ye'll find him a livin' stone sure enough. I wouldn't trust a soul on 'em more'n I would a heap o' black snakes."

This unkind and unmerited thrust of Aunt Polly's filled the measure. Her cup was full, and needed only the additional drop to make it run over, which she was about to add herself. To be sure she did not care for Ernest, oh no, of course she didn't, but then, what was it? she was miserably unhappy. She reproached herself for ever thinking he cared for her. As for Grace Blanche he might have her if he wished, of course he might, it was nothing to her.

Aunt Polly was what might be called an odd jobber. She did washing, house-cleaning, carpet mending, and whatever else of heavy work came in her way. Consequently she did not remain long in one place, and going from house to house gathered all the idle gossip, which lost nothing by repetition. It was her sole recreation, and people bore with her out of regard to her friendless position, and because her services were valuable in her line. Very few cared for what she said, knowing her loquacious propensities, and little reliance was placed on what she did say.

Ordinarily, Rosalind would not have given to her remarks a second thought, but the uncommon asperity with which they were spoken rendered them particularly annoying at a time when she needed to be soothed instead of irritated. She was vexed with her for this needless wound to her feelings, and vexed with herself for allowing so trifling an incident to disturb her. She tried to drive the whole subject

from her thoughts, which was not very easily done. Grace Blanche was a dear friend of theirs and she could not help feeling a deep interest in whatever concerned her welfare. But then to give heed to such senseless talk, coming as it did from one deeply irritated, was the height of absurdity. She knew she ought not for a moment to harbor such an imputation upon the character of Ernest Livingston whether she cared for it or not, and soon found herself struggling against a new current in addition to her other troubles, as unexpected as it was painful. She did not reproach herself for the manner in which she had formerly treated him, but rather approved it as singularly wise, since it showed that she had no particular regard for him, which might be a great advantage to her now. What did she reproach herself for? Nothing, perhaps; but there was a vague restlessness, an undefined feeling of remorse that made her wretched.

The next morning was as delightful as it was three days before, but what a transformation in her. She did not leave her chamber until summoned to breakfast. Instead of the white wrapper she was dressed in a dark print; and her hair, carelessly smoothed over, showed by the somewhat tangled state of her curls that her fingers had neglected their task.

Her mother smiled on observing her, and said, "Well Rosa, what made you dress up so this morning? Are you expecting company?"

She made an attempt to smile at one corner of her mouth, and was silent.

Walter looked at her with mute surprise, secretly

wondering what could make her so changeable. When the meal was over she went to the door and looked out, then immediately returned to her chamber, disconsolate and sad.

The sun shone in its splendor, but it shone not for her ; the flowers bloomed in their beauty, but she heeded them not ; the birds warbled their songs of thanksgiving, but they chanted the funeral dirge of her hopes of earthly happiness.

As Fate would have it, Ernest came this morning also, to invite her to ride. She went down without making any change in her appearance; and met his invitation with a cold, disdainful and prompt refusal.

She turned abruptly away to fondle a little white-footed Maltese kitten Walter brought home one evening, which had strayed away from home and was now amusing herself by catching at the fountain spray as she lay basking in the sunshine. Ernest watched her sadly, contrasting this picture with the other, but as good outlives evil he said to himself, "She will yet repent this and need all the sympathy I can give her," and walked away.

She did repent it before he reached the gate at the foot of the avenue, but it was too late. The cruel words had gone forth, words that were to go down the silent stream of time, never to be recalled or forgotten. Healing waters might flow over it, but the wound would forever leave it's scar, the memento of deep and bitter suffering.

Walter was sitting in the arbor reading, where he could hear and see all, unobserved by them. Inexpressibly pained as he was, he never uttered a word

of rebuke or complaint, nor alluded to it in any way. Rosalind did not meet him until dinner, when she colored deeply as his eye sought her's, though without the least suspicion that he knew what had transpired. She felt guilty of base ingratitude in thus wounding the feelings of his dearest friend. A powerful reaction took place when she returned to her chamber that morning, and was brought into close communion with her inner self, the secret sanctuary where all her acts and motives were laid bare to the probing finger of conscience. The proved author of all her misery, although at first disposed to cast the blame on Aunt Polly, a very common trait in our faulty humanity, she could frame no excuse to justify her in a breach of courtesy which should have been extended to a stranger, to say nothing of his intimate friendship in the family and the uniform kindness with which he had always treated her. Had she been educated into the belief of total depravity no more convincing proof of it's truth would have been needed than her own self-condemnation at that moment. Was there ever a person so ungrateful, so unkind, so utterly unworthy of the tenderness and devotion that had always been lavished upon her ?

The days rolled on, bringing with them many unpleasant reminiscences of the past, one of which was the little white-footed kitten. She had always enjoyed a special privilege which she was unwilling to yield—that of climbing on Rosalind's shoulders to play with her curls, and when tired, to pat her cheek with her paw as a signal to take her in her lap

to rest. Her innocent gambols now sent a thousand arrows through her soul, and she tried to get rid of her society, but Miss Tabby would not take the hint.

One morning after being pushed off by her mistress, she looked up at her reproachfully and then scampered away in search of mischief, which was soon found in the shape of an elegant fancy hat that had been carelessly left on the dressing table with the strings hanging down just far enough for her claws to drag on the floor, where, after disarranging the flowers to her heart's content she snugly ensconced herself within it for her morning nap.

Milly went out one day, and seeing some children with a quantity of pond lilies, begged a few for Rosalind, knowing her fondness for them, and thinking to surprise her agreeably by placing them in her room. She was doomed to disappointment by hearing a painful "Oh!" as Rosalind entered one door while she was going out at the other. By way of apology Milly returned and took the flowers saying, "Oh I suppose Mr. Livingston brings you all the lilies you want."

Rosalind soon followed her out, having too much strength of character to allow herself to be long discomposed at the expense of another's happiness. Of great self-control there was nothing in her manner to indicate that she suffered now more than usual, and the real goodness in her temper, always came out in the opposite scale in connection with her greatest faults; a fact no one was quicker to perceive than Ernest Livingston.

Milly and Walter were busily engaged with a lame

squirrel the former had picked up in her walk, to whom Rosalind rendered timely assistance by binding its leg which she feared was broken. Walter was delighted, being exceedingly fond of pets, and particularly of squirrels. He provided a cage and everything necessary for the comfort of her majesty, but, after a few days, when the wounded leg had time to heal, Madame Squirrel showed her gratitude for their kind attentions by walking off the first opportunity, not liking the luxuries of her city home. The little unconscious thing was the source of the greatest happiness Rosalind knew since she last saw Mr. Livingston.

## **CHAPTER XVI.**

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Who bears no trace of Passion's evil force!  
Who shuns thy sting, O terrible Remorse!  
    Who would not cast  
Half of this future from him, but to win  
Wakeless oblivion for the wrong and sin  
    Of the sealed Past!

"What the deuce has sent you here?" said James Morgan, laying down his sixpence for a glass of spirit, to Walter Claremont who was just entering the bar-room, a place where he had never been seen before.

"Your good angel, I trust," replied Walter, as he looked calmly round on the bloated faces that lined the room. Then taking James' arm, he led him reluctantly out just as the tempting draught was within his reach.

Not a word was said as they walked on and on to a wood where they seated themselves. Walter was the first to break the silence. "Do you love Mary Kingley?"

James started at the directness of the question, and replied by asking another, "Why, what do you mean by that?"

"Because I have made a solemn pledge that makes it necessary to ask it. Oh James! Are you aware of the abyss into which you are so madly plunging,

bringing ruin upon yourself, and blasting the happiness of others ? That day you fell from the bridge and were taken up senseless, I passed by Mr. Kingley's on my return home, and Mary stood in the door pale as death. I intended to pass without speaking, as you know we are not much acquainted, and I felt that she would not care for the notice of any body at that time ; but without any ceremony she asked me hurriedly if I had seen you, and how you were. I told her I had, and that you were not considered seriously injured. Then, her voice slightly trembling, she asked if I knew what made you fall. I hesitated a moment, and seeing by her changing color, the nervous motion of her lips, and the keen penetration of her eyes when she raised them, that she read the truth, and it was vain as well as wrong to conceal it from her, I resolved to answer—”

“ Oh Walter ! you did not tell her, did you ? I would not have her know it for the world ! Oh, my Mary ! you will not cast me off ! you *must* not ! ”

“ Do you suppose I would deceive her ? No ! I should want any body to tell my sister, and you ought to have seen how like a hero she bore it. As white as marble, she was firm as a statue. You know some girls would have fainted, or gone into hysterics. I was standing on the door step, and she on the sill. She leaned against the side with her eyes fixed on that little bench under the great elm-tree where you used to sit together so much when you were children, as if beseeching it to try to save you. It was an awkward position for me I assure you. I did not know what to say next, and turned to leave. She

beckoned me to follow her into the summer-house at the end of the yard. You know that stands against the side of the house which is not generally occupied, so that nobody could see or hear us. It was towards night when her father was liable to come home any moment, and I knew by her constant lookout what she was afraid of, and saw where I could cut through the back yard if he did come, so he would not see me. I am almost afraid of that man."

" You needn't be. He'd be glad enough to have you go there, and to see Mary too. He hates me I know, and would hate me if I were as good as you are. Mean rascal, it's he that's made my father drink. I can remember when I was a little boy how he used to get him in there and treat him, and if it had not been for that, I might have been as steady as you are."

" There is no time now to talk about that, or make choice of epithets. Mary asked me if I did not think there was any possibility of making you reform. What to say I did not know. You know how many times I have talked with you, James, to no purpose. After a few minutes pause, I said, 'I shall do all in my power to reclaim him, but I cannot promise you success.' Her eyes brightened as she replied, ' Oh do ! if anybody can influence him you can. Will you promise to try once more ? I know you are one of James's confidential friends, or I should not have taken the freedom I have,' when her eyes dropped, and the color rushed into her cheeks,—how I pitied her ! Modest and retiring as she is, I knew what a desperate struggle it must have cost to make such a

confident of me, and then I am so much younger too, that I felt greatly honored to be entrusted with such a mission. My compassion and admiration were both so much excited that I forgot to answer until she looked up at me imploringly, and I could see the tears were fast coming into her eyes. 'I promise it solemnly,' said I, and immediately bade her good night, for I knew she must prefer to be left alone then. She is a prize, James. The next day I received a letter from her in which she disclosed her plans. She said that if you persisted in your present course every consideration of duty must prompt her to break the engagement existing between you. 'But,' said she, 'if you can only induce him to reform, and he should refrain entirely from his old habits one year, I will see him again at the end of that time.'"

"Then she refuses to see me, she despises me, Oh Mary! Mary!"

"Why, James, you are beside yourself, how can you say that in truth? How could you ask her to become your wife when your love of strong drink is greater than your love for her. Certainly you would not have her so degrade herself, or be so false to all sense of self respect as to marry under such circumstances. Only think of the life of misery she must lead. Look at your father, and see what your mother has suffered. If he had been in that habit when they were married and she knew it, do you think she would ever have forgiven herself? It is bad enough when it cannot be helped."

"She might let me see her again. At any rate, I *will* see her."

"Oh James, do not be so heartless. Do have some regard for her feelings. You must know how tantalizing it would be to hold any farther intercourse with you, if she felt that it must be broken off sometime. I wish you could have seen her, you would not have any distrust of her then. She will never be any whiter when she lies in her coffin, her lips were as bloodless as they'll ever be, and yet she looked so trustful, so loving. I would go to the ends of the earth and live on bread and water, to serve such a being. Only think what a risk she runs to trust you if you will keep steady a year. There are ten chances to one that a man will fall back into his old habits when the restraint is gone, and he has gained the prize he sought. And now James, as I shudder to think of the possibility of such a thing, if I shall be in the least instrumental in effecting your union, do you pledge yourself here in the silence of this wood with none but God to witness, that you will never bring that reproach upon yourself, such an unfailing source of regret to me, and such life-long misery to your angel wife."

James buried his face in his hands and wept like a child. For a moment Walter feared that he had spoken too strongly, but recollecting that former interviews had proved fruitless, he knew that it was only by a strong, decided course he could hope to wield any influence over him, and sought not to arrest the current of feeling in which alone lay the hope of salvation.

At length James rose abruptly, saying, "Walter, I shan't stay here any longer."

"Why, where are you going?"

"To the river!"

Walter shuddered as he stepped in front of him, and thought what might be his intention. Laying his hand on his arm, he said calmly, but firmly, "No James, you must not go yet, I have something more to say to you."

With that unconscious power Walter possessed over others, he swayed the impulsive James who sat down again, gentle and passive as a child.

"Can you not summon the resolution to say that you will never taste another drop?"

For the first time since they left the bar-room James met the full glance of Walter's eye. He read in it something so confiding, so full of comfort, that the strong burst of passion was subdued, and he answered hopefully, "I will try if you will help me."

"I will, to the extent of my power; but it is your own will that must decide your fate."

"You, Walter, situated as you are, know nothing what it is for me to resist the temptations by which I am continually surrounded."

A slight tone of reproach curled his lips as he said these words which pained Walter, who felt the truth of the remark.

"I admit it, James, but that is no reason why I should not seek to save you. I have formed a plan for you to leave this place with all its associations, and beyond the reach of your present companions begin a new life. I know a place about six miles from here in a pleasant country town, where I think I can obtain a situation for you as clerk in a store,

and will also see that you have a good boarding place, secure from the voice of temptation. An elderly gentleman, a friend of my mother's, lives there, who, I think, can be prevailed upon to take you into his family, for he is too kind-hearted to refuse any opportunity of doing good. His wife would be a real mother to you. Now, what do you say to that? I will go and see about it to-morrow, if you say so."

" Anything, I will do anything you advise, if it is to stand on my head."

Walter laughed at the seriousness with which this was spoken, and they quitted the wood. When they reached Mr. Morgan's door they parted.

The next day Walter succeeded in procuring the desired situation, and before the week was out James entered on his new duties. The first month seemed very long. He missed the excitement to which he had been accustomed, and most of all he missed Mary's society. The thought that he could not see her for a whole year distressed him greatly, but it helped to strengthen his resolution, so as to be permitted the privilege at the end of that time. When he thirsted for his cup, Walter's suggestion that he loved it more than her made him abhor it.

He was a young man of great promise and rare talent, of prepossessing appearance, which gained him numerous friends and acquaintances, some of whom were too fond of good cheer for his advantage. Easily influenced, as genial characters are apt to be, unless endowed with an uncommon share of firmness, he

was led into a career of intemperance before he was aware.

At the time Mr. Kingley set up his business as liquor seller, Mr. Morgan was a respectable, well-to-do man of the world, and if he did not have such a marked effect in society as some others, he bid fair to leave his children an honest name. Mr. Kingley was poor, and many a favor Mr. Morgan had done him, being very generous-hearted, and he, in pretended friendship, would treat him. Then it was a practice of customary hospitality, but Mr. Kingley was too avaricious a man to be very free with any thing of his unless he expected to fill his coffers in return. As he grew rich on his ill-gotten gains, he began to despise his victims when they grew poor in consequence. His daughter Mary was his only child, and his affection for her was his only redeeming feature. To his wife he was basely lacking in kindness and refinement.

James and Mary were about the same age, and had always been playmates together until their affection ripened into love. Her father raised no objection so long as Mr. Morgan's fortunes were above his own, but, as they gradually sunk, and James became the dissipated son of a drunken father, he watched them with jealous eyes. Having doted upon Mary and indulged every wish, it was very hard to say anything to her, but he did not spare James. He threatened and annoyed him in every way possible, and hurried him on to ruin as much as lay in his power, knowing very well that Mary's good sense would be sufficient to guard her against such an imprudent marriage.

He missed no opportunity to exaggerate his faults in her hearing, which had the opposite effect of exciting her pity, and intensifying her love. She despised her father's business, and knew that whatever were James' failings, he was in a great measure responsible for them. She felt no inclination, or prompting of duty to cast him off, until she had made an effort at least to save him. She never doubted the sincerest love on his part, and that in her pure eyes was enough to warrant the hope of redemption. If that failed, surely no other earthly means could wrest him from the tempter's grasp.

Walter was four or five years younger than James, but, as he was always forming friendships with those older than himself, he was strongly attached to him as a schoolmate, and their intimacy continued as they grew into manhood.

Walter was so old for his years, that he assumed a rank in society, and was looked up to as a friend and counsellor much sooner than is usual for young men. His sincerity and earnestness won for him entire confidence so that Mary felt no hesitation in trusting him with this most momentous question of hers. His youth relieved her of much of the embarrassment she would have experienced in speaking so freely of what every woman wishes to keep to herself, to a young man of her own age. It was, as he said, a desperate struggle for her to do it, but what will not any of us do when a beloved one stands on the brink of a fearful precipice, down which he is to plunge from our gaze forever, unless some friendly hand intervenes?

Had Walter and James both moved in the same circle, Walter's influence would have been more steadily exerted over him, but as the democracy of childhood was merged into the exclusiveness which attends scholarship, James' pursuits led him into a different rank of associates. Again and again, when they occasionally met had Walter remonstrated with him for the society he kept, and James had as often promised amendment, but his promises were as often broken.

## **CHAPTER XVII.**

---

“It was an evening bright and still  
As ever blushed on wave or bower,  
Smiling from heaven, as if nought ill  
Could happen in so sweet an hour.”

Six weeks passed away without bringing any consolation to Rosalind. She had not seen Ernest, nor heard anything of him since that eventful morning. There could be no doubt then that she had banished him forever from her presence, and perhaps also broken the friendship existing between him and Walter, the thought of which alone oppressed her. There was just as much reason to fear that the bond of affection between herself and her father would be dissolved as the link that bound together those two loving souls.

There is a peculiar sacredness in the term friendship, a something essentially holy in its character which belongs to no other human loye. Family ties have their own particular sanctity, and the marriage relation, its omnipotent, heaven-inspiring, all-embracing love; but friendship, independent of family ties, recognizing no external bond of union,—the spontaneous out-gushing of kindred spirits towards each other, breathes in an atmosphere peculiarly its own.

Rosalind had often dwelt in thought upon the beautiful intimacy that had sprung up between Ernest

and Walter, and the congeniality which had drawn them into such close companionship that the most trifling minutiae of the daily life of each was unfolded to the other, in their discussions always assimilating in the end, though they might reach it by different opinions on the way. Often had she watched them from her chamber window as they strolled down the avenue, breaking a twig from the trees, or so engrossed in conversation they turned neither to the right nor left ; or sitting on the greensward in front of the house watching the play of the fountain where she occasionally joined them—Ponty lazily stretched upon the grass drowsily opening his eyes when Mademoiselle Tabby marched up in a warlike attitude and then contented herself with performing a dress parade around his tail—had she heard them discourse of men and things with the sageness of philosophers, and indulge in anecdotes that sent their merry peals of laughter through the air. She could endure this suspense no longer, and resolved to tell Walter the whole, if she could find a way to begin, but that was a puzzle. Innumerable obstacles beset her. She would not in any case betray any other feeling for Ernest than as his friend, which she hadn't ! therefore, what need of precaution ? She was entangled in a web, not so easily brushed away as spun.

Of course he had no particular regard for her except as his friend's sister. Certainly not. Then it was not such a serious affair after all, he merely invited her to ride, and she refused, not so courteously as she ought, and the reason ? That included

the whole affair, and was not to be gainsaid or evaded, especially by her outspoken self.

Finally she turned philosopher, and reasoned wisely and well, if life could be reasoned out instead of lived. It was altogether best she should never be married, since it was so hard for her to submit to the trials she must be prepared to meet in assuming the responsibilities of such a relation. But what had that to do with Ernest, or what she wished to say to Walter? Ah! instinct was more powerful than reason. Her whole soul's being was stirred and no incidental phrase could meet its demands in such a crisis.

Then she decided to put all scruples aside and ask him simply if he knew what had become of Ernest that he did not come to see them as formerly. Here arose a choking in her throat as if that were an imposition not to be thought of, for of course she knew. Then she thought of a picture he had given her which might be laid carelessly on the table to attract Walter's notice, when she could remark naturally enough that he had not been here lately. How could she be so heartless as to treat lightly what had cost her so much agony? No, she would do no such thing, and tolerate no disguises, but manage the point some way to get information of him which did not, of necessity, demand an explanation. The ice once broken, possibly she might proceed without embarrassment.

The day was very warm and sultry, and she felt languid and depressed. Walter was going to be at home that afternoon, and she was determined to ask

him the first time they met alone if he knew anything of Ernest. Soon after dinner there came a violent thunder shower, accompanied with hail, which did a great deal of damage. The hailstones were very large, coming with such force as to shiver into atoms a window in the dining-room where the blinds had just been opened to admit the light. The family had collected in the front hall, and Kate was the first to rush in to see what had happened.

"Good heavens!" said she, "if the day o' judgment's come won't we have a merry time kickin' all this glass about, and peltin' each other with stones 'fore we take our leave? A merry dance we'll have, and go up in the clouds."

The storm abated, and Walter was obliged to go to the glazier's as soon as it was over. He did not return until tea-time when he brought an invitation for them all to spend the evening out, about three miles distant.

He was very much surprised and disappointed when Rosalind resolutely refused to go. She generally acceded to his wishes in such things, and he was almost impatient with her for so wilfully persisting in denying herself the pleasure a ride must afford when every thing was so bright and smiling, as if all earth's sorrows, like the summer's noon tide heat, must vanish before the invigorating breezes and inspiring emotions of such an evening.

Tears came into her eyes as Walter said, "Well, Rosa, I hope you will have a good time here all alone."

Of course she could not reproach him for it, but

reproached herself for being so selfish as to be unwilling to gratify him in so trifling a matter. She watched the carriage as it rolled slowly down the avenue. The slight motion of the horse's mane, as he set up a gentle trot, reminded her of other days when a little girl her father lifted her in childish glee to put her hands upon it, and seated her upon his back. A dear old creature he was, always so docile a child might drive him, yet full of energy which he still retained, although he had lost some of the fire of his youth.

It seemed as if an age had passed since those days, an age that had transformed this world into a different sphere from what it was then, yet in outward aspect the same. This led her into a close investigation of the causes that had produced the change and a rapid retrospect of her own experience for the last three years. No very flattering picture she drew of herself, the background of which was of too sombre a hue to admit much of the sunlight necessary for an agreeable impression, and the finishing touch was not of a character to redeem it of its ugliness. She felt the utter sinfulness of wasting these golden years of her life in worse than useless repinings, shutting out of her soul those genial influences which God gives us to beautify and enable it, and refusing the enjoyment of the blessings which home and friends were so ready to lavish upon her. She did not pursue this train of thought long. Her mind soon wandered back into the old channel which had engaged it that day, how to introduce Walter into the secret of her present troubles. Her last conclu-

sion was to enquire about Ernest, as her suspense in that respect began to overpower her own personal relations in the matter. This was a course comparatively easy, but now the opportunity was wanting. The next day he was going away, and it seemed almost impossible to rest another night. Then in a few weeks he was to leave home, and how could she live without him under these circumstances.

After restlessly diverting herself by going from one thing to another to no purpose, she sat down by her chamber window which overlooked the front yard. It was already twilight, that hour so deeply suggestive of past pleasures and future hopes, so full of vague yearnings to the restless wanderer, whose day dreams assume a spectral shape as the visionary hour of night approaches. She beguiled the weary moments by gazing into the dim distance which returned no answering smile of cheer or consolation. All along the unbroken stillness seemed to come an irresistible impetus to her ardent desire for questioning Walter, until she tortured herself into the belief that something had really happened to Ernest, something for which her conscience told her she would be responsible. There was still a faint hope of an opportunity that night on Walter's return. A habit had existed between them from childhood which he had been particularly careful to observe for the last six weeks, a good night kiss. If he staid out until she had retired to her chamber he sought entrance there, and would he not do it now if she failed to meet them at the door on their return. Then recollecting how earnestly he had plead with her to

accompany them, would not his patience be exhausted by this time, and thus this last anchor of hope float by. As all visible objects began to grow indistinct she could just perceive the little frolicsome kitten performing her wild antics in the flower circle. She rested her head on her hand to shut out, if possible, these unpleasant associations.

\* \* \* \* \*

In another chamber sat Milly and Kate discussing their old topic, the novel, which Kate broached by an unceremonious entrance, singing at the top of her voice,

The sun was shining brightiy  
Over the fields and the clover,  
The grasshoppers chirped,  
The bobolinks winked,  
And the little pigs squealed right merrily.

“There’s some poetry for you to put at the head of the second chapter, and no play of the fancy neither, but a real farm scene out in the country. That’s what I call a five-legged metre.”

Milly felt unusually languid that day, and scarcely noticed Kate’s merriment. For the last few moments she had been watching Rosalind who went to a white rose-bush as if to pluck a rose, then suddenly changing her mind, returned to the house. She was now pondering why she did not go to ride with her mother and Walter. Half mentally she said in a low voice, which Kate’s quick ear readily caught. “So true it is that the lips may be wreathed in smiles while the heart is torn with anguish. One would think Rosalind might be perfectly happy.”

“And its her own fault that she ain’t. If she likes to be at cross pints, she must, that’s all.”

"You judge her too harshly. She used to be the light of the house."

"I should call her the spite of the house from the way she acts sometimes, but then she has always treated me well."

"She is walking through the shadows now."

"I should think she was walkin' through shadders, and has a mighty likin' for 'em too. I should think she'd be afraid of ghosts in the way she treats Mr. Livingston. Give her as much to do as I have and she wouldn't have no time to be huntin' up shadders."

"Why, how does she treat him? I've wondered why he doesn't come here now."

"I guess he won't come here again, behave as she did when he asked her to go to ride. I'd a sent her 'tother side the moon chasin' after the stars."

"I can't believe that. He will come to see Walter. Did he really invite her to ride?"

"Sartain. He had the handsomest hoss and shay you ever see, and he looked so happy and smilin' I could 'a rid to heaven on his smile, and lived on the light of his eyes when I got there. You see I mistrusted what was a foot when I went to the door and see how spruce he looked, and see the hoss and team out at the gate. So thinks I to myself I'm goin' to see how this affair comes out. Well, so I went up to call Miss Rosalind, and bless my stars, how she looked! I thought she must be dressed up to go out washin'. It was easy enough to change her frock you know, but her hair was in the same plight, and it would take longer to smooth out her curls.

Think, says I, I hope his patience will hold out till she gets fixed up. If you believe me, she went down just as she was! What do you 'spose he thought? But that wan't the worst of it. You see my curiosity was pretty well pricked up by that time and I thought I'd listen right behind the screen there. He spoke so soft and low I couldn't hear what he said, but she snarled out somethin' as crabbed as sour vinegar, and then went off and left him standin' there."

"Is that so?"

"I'm ready to swear to it by all the saints and holy virgins."

"You needn't go so far as that Kate, but that *is* incomprehensible anyhow."

"Don't go to usin' any such long heavy word as that; come right to the pint, and say she ought to have her nose put out o' jint for cuttin' such a shine with him. She might live a spinster and spin street yarn for amusement all the days of her life afore I'd stand between her and the sun again."

"What is the reason you never told of it before, if you knew it?"

"You don't 'spose I'm such a fool as to tell all I know, do you?"

"I don't think Rosa ever cared about marrying, but that needn't have prevented her from going to ride."

"Oh, don't you believe that. All these young girls mean to be married, only they like to flirt a little first. I expect 'twas somethin' she heard about Miss Blanche that nettled her up so. I'll warrant you she gets some of Mr. Livingston's visits now."

"If he really loves Rosalind he won't give her up so. The more faults he sees the more pity he'll have for her, and love her all the more."

"Gracious Peter! if that ain't the essence of love extracted out of a moon-struck sunbeam! The more hateful a person acts, the better folks will like 'em. That beats good folks bein' no better'n bad ones."

"I mean when a person sincerely loves another, his or her faults will not diminish that love because it is so strong as to overlook them in the excellence of other qualities which first drew it out."

"Nonsense! But look at my hair, what if the bell should ring? It looks as if Moll Pitcher's young ones had quarreled over it and left it in a fright. There's somebody comin' up now, looks like Mr. Livingston's ghost," and she made her exit as quick as she had made her entrance.

It was not Mr. Livingston, but Mrs. Frizzlewit, who was now on a begging mission for a poor emigrant family just arrived, and wished to see Mrs. Claremont and Walter. Learning that they were not at home, she made no stop, but immediately sought Miss Blanche, to consult her upon the most feasible plan of rendering them assistance. "If you will ask Mr. Livingston to contribute," said she, "you will do me a great favor, and besides, I think he will be more likely to give to you than to me."

"No, never," replied Grace Blanche with much spirit, "I should not ask him if there were an opportunity, and I do not know that I shall ever see him again."

Mrs. Frizzlewit inherited the natural propensity of

liking to gather news, especially concerning young people, and she was confident by the tone and manner in which her friend spoke, that something had happened which would be exceedingly interesting to know. No persuasion, however, could extort anything more, and she was obliged to content herself with the suspicion that a misunderstanding had occurred between them. "A most unaccountable thing though," she kept soliloquizing, and what was more unaccountable still, became so engrossed by it as to forget the farther prosecution of her mission for that night. The bell rung nine before she was aware, and never allowing herself to be absent from her family later than that hour unless some uncommon occasion demanded it, she hurried away.

It was quite a relief to Miss Blanche, who was already beginning to regret the betrayal of her own feelings in that unguarded remark. She also, in common with Rosalind, was lost in reverie at the time Mrs. Frizzlewit made her appearance.

Mr. Livingston had deeply wounded her feelings by passing her unrecognized on the morning of his unfortunate adventure at Orange Grove. Pre-occupied as his mind then was, the air might have been full of Grace Blanches and he would not have seen them. Only one image was present to his mind. No matter if it was unseemly, it was capable of transformation, and in that light was constantly reappearing.

For all this however, the shock to his sensitive nature was greater than he was willing to acknowledge, which rebounded in another shock to Miss

Blanche's equal sensitiveness at this particular time. He had not imagined that any thing could so disturb his equanimity and self-possession, as he was obliged to confess by many instances of absence of mind which occurred that day. He came near ruining the picture upon which he was at work, by an involuntary suggestion that the eyes did not sufficiently resemble Rosalind's to be of any worth, forgetful that hers was closely veiled and put away out of sight until—he knew not what. The contrast between that morning and the other was too painful to be banished.

Miss Blanche, however, knew nothing of this, and experienced an equally painful sensation in contrasting his friendliness towards her only two evenings before and his coldness now. Every one knows the chilling effect produced by meeting unrecognized one whom we have learned to respect or even a casual acquaintance, as if the sympathetic vein of human nature was robbed of some of its vitality thereby. Yet it is a very common experience, towards which we unconsciously contribute our own share when engrossed with care, or burdened with anxiety.

Mr. Livingston was seldom, if ever, guilty before of such a breach of courtesy, being one of those persons the sight of whom rejoices one like the sunshine after a shower; so much of the kindness of the heart welled up into the look of recognition which no ordinary care or anxiety could repress, and whose respectful bearing flowed equally towards all, whether friend or foe, if he had any; the lady in foreign laces, or the beggar in homespun.

## **CHAPTER XVIII.**

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“Why should I murmur? for the sorrow  
    Thus only longer lived would be;  
Its end may come; and well, to-morrow,  
    When God has done his work in me,  
So I say trusting,—as God will!  
    And trusting to the end, hold still.”

Although it was with no happy sensation Ernest departed that unlucky morning from his brief interview with Rosalind, he experienced no feeling of reproach or vexation. As he rode on musingly, and felt the gentle breeze from the river, flowing calm and peacefully, as if nothing in this outward world could disturb the eternal harmony with which God had rounded and perfected every wave that its rippling murmur should be heard through ages to come as it had been through ages past, a quiet peace overspread his soul, and he felt a willingness to trust all with unshaken confidence to Him who had power to command the winds and the sea, and they obey him. Love alone is immortal, for only in the divine attributes pertaining to its own comprehensive character is incarnated the Deity himself. Just in proportion as man possesses the gift which is free to all who ask it, can he wield the power flowing from it to heal the sins of humanity. Something of this nature, like the breath of inspiration, swept through the brain of

Ernest. He returned to his room and sat down to give the finishing touches to a painting laid aside in his eagerness to sketch Rosalind. When it was completed he proposed to himself a short walk, indulging a hope of coming in contact with Walter. He had not proceeded far when he met the post-boy bringing him a letter. It contained a message from a near friend of his, an old classmate, who was fast wasting away in the last stage of consumption and wished to see him as soon as possible. Deeming it necessary to start next morning he had no time to lose, and instantly set about preparations for the journey, expecting to return in a few days. Seeing that his friend would not probably survive long he did not leave him again, and after his death was detained several weeks on business he desired him to attend to. His thoughts constantly reverted to Rosalind, and the conjectures she would have about him, which made the time seem very long. Under other circumstances he would have written to Walter and explained his absence.

At length the wished-for day of his return arrived, when he secured a seat in the old lumbering stage coach which had a welcome, home-like look as it rumbled over the hills and valleys. At sunset he was safely landed at the door of the hotel which, in those days, was none the less popular for the ruinous traffic it carried on. Scarcely observing the fierce altercations and rude scuffling in the bar-room, sights and sounds that seldom failed to give him a painful sensation for the reminiscence they brought of the first and last night he ever spent in the society

of staggering limbs and wandering brains, since which time not a drop of champagne had passed his lips, he hastened by to a private entrance through which he gained access to his own room. Refreshing himself a few moments after the heat and dust of the day, he soon traced his steps in the familiar direction of Orange Grove.

When Mr. Claremont was married he built a large and elegant mansion on a landed estate formerly the possession of one of his wife's ancestors. He laid out the grounds according to his own taste, preserving one old oak tree for its antiquity, which stood near the house. Mrs. Claremont had a great passion for orange trees, some half dozen of which were in full bloom at one time. From this circumstance he gave their residence the poetical name of Orange Grove.

As Mr. Livingston walked up the shaded avenue in the dusk of evening, a perfect silence reigned throughout the house and over the grounds. The rooms were not yet lighted, and there was no sign of any living thing save the little white-footed kitten capering in the flower circle, who signified her welcome by scampering off as fast as she could go when he came up, unconscious of the invisible fibres of the human soul she had in her power to twinge with unutterable pain! She called up so vividly the memory of that other morning, as to unsettle for a moment the confidence with which he had looked forward to this hour, but quickly reassuring himself and banishing his fears, he ascended the steps and pulled the bell. Kate fancied there was a slight

tremor in his voice as he enquired for Rosalind which disappeared upon being told that she was in.

Being vexed with her Kate would not tell who the visitor was, but announced simply that a gentleman wished to see her. With the coolest indifference Rosalind descended to the parlor, neither caring nor guessing who her guest might be. As she met again those eyes that had never looked upon her but in kindness and love, and pressed again the hand that had so often pressed hers in silent sympathy, the floods of feeling swept away all self-control, and she burst into tears.

Weep on, Rosa, those tears are the seal of thy baptism into a higher life.

The barrier was dissolved. Deeper than all speech, more expressive than any outward symbol, was the impressive silence of that hour, the charm of which he sought not to break. It was the soul's confession. To him there was sweeter music in those sobs than ever came from sylvan lips. There was no more restraint or embarrassment, and in parting that night, though the outward pledge remained unspoken, each felt that they were wedded before God.

The moon, just risen, gave a sparkling radiance to the river whose peaceful flow they sat up long to watch in their respective chambers, to them symbolic of the quiet, noiseless manner in which their own lives had thus suddenly and silently merged into one.

Walter and his mother did not return until nearly midnight. She trembled at the sound of his footsteps lest he might intrude upon her meditations,

desiring now to be left to herself. He, judging by the lateness of the hour and her own silence that she must be asleep, did not disturb her.

There was an evident change in her the next morning, but being full of changes these times, no comment was made. It was the subdued expression of a soul in which suffering and sorrow had been assuaged by a special revelation of inward peace. Neither Walter nor his mother could sympathize with her in the peculiar spiritual experience through which the singular combination of her mental powers led her, which fact, doubtless, accounted for the extraordinary affinity existing between herself and her father, whose organization her own resembled in some of its striking points.

It was instinct, more powerful than any outward demonstration of affection, that drew them together even in her babyhood, through which he derived his great influence over her.

At breakfast Walter joked her some in the course of the conversation upon the evening's entertainment, about the enjoyment she lost, to which she quietly replied that she had enjoyed herself at home. Interesting herself in her mother's plans with more spirit than was her wont, and Walter being absent, a quiet, yet happy time they had, which was not interrupted by a single visitor. Human nature is so magnetic that we cannot resist the contagious influences arising from the emotions of joy or grief. If a person is happy an involuntary radiation unconsciously raises the spirits of all within its sphere.

Rosalind diffused this peaceful contentment over

the whole house that day. Milly and Kate felt it whenever they came in contact with her, and many conjectures they held privately of what might have taken place the night before, but one thing was certain Kate said, "he did her a mighty deal o' good anyhow," and became quite reconciled to the possibility which Milly had suggested, "that if he really loved her he would have her yet," though it did not quite square with her ideas of what a young man should do when a young lady "cut up such a shine with him." She really liked Rosalind better than she was willing to acknowledge, but Ernest was her ideal of perfection and she could not tolerate any breach of courtesy towards him from any source.

Walter had just entered the drawing room after his return that evening, when Ernest was ushered in. He met him with shouts of welcome, exclaiming, "I did not know you had come; did you know it Rosa?" She was silent. Not all the powers of the universe could have induced her to answer the question at that moment.

"Yes," said Ernest, "Rosa knew I had come, and it shows she can keep a secret," taking her hand in his as he seated himself beside her on the sofa. Walter looked puzzled.

"I did not know but you had cut our acquaintance as you did not write to Walter," said Mrs. Claremont, ironically, to which Walter quickly replied by way of turning the conversation, "A bad penny soon returns, so I had no fear we should not see you again."

"I was gone much longer than I expected when I left. You knew where I went?" remarked Ernest.

"No, I went over to your room that morning just in season to get a glimpse of you in the old stage coach, and I made up my mind that as you had gone off without ceremony, you might return without ceremony, and I would let you enjoy it."

"Walter is such an easy genius he never borrows any trouble for aught that happens," observed his mother, "he would make light of it, and say, 'Oh, he knows his own business, he will come back when he gets ready, I know he will,' which nobody doubted."

The curious expression of Walter's face when his mother said this, convinced Ernest that he knew the whole, in spite of his assumed indifference as he said abstractly, "And so you did, didn't you? but it's been lonesome enough here without you."

All this conversation was torture to Rosalind. She would have given worlds had they been at her command to have blotted out that little page of her history. As Ernest held her hand he imagined he could feel the blood come and go; and to relieve her embarrassment, proposed going to an exhibition that evening, which in reality had no interest for either of them. As she rose without any hesitation to get ready, Walter glanced curiously from her to her mother, very much to the amusement of Ernest. She had not spoken since he entered the parlor, and her evident confusion betrayed a personal interest in the matter which excited her mother's curiosity not a little.

"That's a mighty funny affair," said Walter, after

they had gone, "how ready she was to go off with him to-night when she has always been so afraid of his company."

Mrs. Claremont smiled. Soon Milly came in, looking very much amused.

"Milly," said Walter, "was Mr. Livingston here last night while we were gone?"

"That's for you to find out," she smilingly replied.

"Well I know how I can find out, I'll make Kate tell me," continued he, rushing out.

"Kate, did Mr. Livingston call here last night in our absence?"

"An' sure, you don't 'spose I'd be for tellin' the young lady's secrets do you?"

Walter had not been so "easy" as his mother represented or as his own manner indicated. He had a great deal of anxiety about the consequences. The friendship of Ernest was something beyond price and the thought of sacrificing it he could not tolerate. After witnessing what he had, there seemed to be reason for his staying away, and consoled himself with the belief that things would all come out right yet, a favorite dogma in his creed. He knew Ernest too well to suspect him of any such weakness as breaking a friendship voluntarily because of Rosalind's incomprehensible freaks. He might feel embarrassed about calling; which led Walter to seek him next morning, and watch his return, deeming it incumbent on himself under the circumstances to make the first advance.

Ernest and Rosalind walked on past the door of the exhibition, which it is doubtful if either knew

when passing it to a favorite little dell, near the water's edge where he and Walter had held many a lively chat and grave conversation. A fine breeze from the river was well calculated to cool the fevered brow of Rosalind ; and the rising moon smiled beneficently on them as if to chase away her disquietude, and breathe over each the holy calm emanating from it's own bosom. Rosalind gazed at it for some moments in silence, apparently unconscious of the still more earnest gaze fixed upon her by the soft, loving eyes of Ernest, whose soul-lit radiance testified of a joy too deep for utterance, as they read in that young, thoughtful face the traces of a kindred sorrow which had bound their two souls in one, and sanctified their love by the consciousness that it was no dream of butterfly existence, but a sober reality in which trials were to be met and endured, as well as blessings shared and enjoyed.

"A faithful watch the moon and stars keep over each other," said she, playfully.

"As faithful as you and I will be to God, and to each other?"

"Oh Ernest, how dare you trust me?"

"Trust you, Rosalind ? I have always trusted you, and I always shall!"

## **CHAPTER XIX.**

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“ I love to go  
Out in the pleasant sun, and let my eye  
Rest on the human faces that pass by,  
Each with its gay and busy interest;  
And then I muse upon their lot, and read  
Many a lesson in their changeful cast;  
And so grow kind of heart, as if the sight  
Of human beings were humanity.”

It was a pleasant morning in the early spring, such as makes one feel an irresistible longing to be out in the open air and enjoy the warming genial influences which seem to open our hearts to nature's kindly teachings as much as to penetrate and dissolve the icy shroud of winter.

Amelia Crawford, who had been busily engaged all the week in assisting at preparations for a grand *fête* that was to come off that evening, being at leisure, resolved to avail herself of the privileges of the day and take a walk, which she always enjoyed for the opportunity it afforded her to come in contact with the busy crowd that thronged the streets, in whom she took a lively interest, though apparently so inaccessible to human susceptibility. She stepped into a store where she was acquainted, in one of the principal thoroughfares of the city, and stood for some time at the window watching the passers by, an interesting amusement, and one which furnishes many

an interesting theme for reflection to an attentive observer.

The merry child, rudely jostled aside in the midst of his harmless play by the bustling man of business, little dreams of the ruder thrusts that await his moral as well as his physical man in this work-day world of ours, when something sterner and more practical than a few childish tears must come to his relief. Age, leaning on its staff, looking down the narrow path which, ere long will close entirely to its footsteps, is fortunate indeed, if occasionally, one of the busy throng vouchsafes a kindly smile in recognition of its kindred nature.

There in the middle of the muddy street stands a girl, fourteen perhaps, fighting her way against a troop of boys who wantonly upset her basket containing a few nondescript articles, one of which she quickly seizes and hurries out of sight, while they hoot after her with the cry of "thief," whether with just cause or not no one asks or cares to know. Amelia watches her with a half resolution to intercede in her behalf, or plead with her to tell the truth in the matter; but while debating within herself and halting at the door, she loses sight of the girl, and stands there regretting her own want of decision in not seizing that opportunity for affecting some good, thus perhaps, missing the slender thread on which hangs the reputation of many an individual whose name might never have been remembered, but for some trivial occurrence which first opened the way for other deeds which have won the gratitude and admiration of the human race.

In a few moments she was roused from her reverie by a smile of recognition from Ernest Livingston, and directly behind him followed Grace Blanche, who gave her no friendly greeting, although she worked for her only the day before. Her mind was too much occupied with the figure before her, in the line of which she kept such an even balance that, turning his head on either side, he would miss a glimpse of her. Imagination had been too busy at work during those several months for conscience or reason to act calmly or wisely, and if she had not intended to harbor any unkind feeling towards him, it would have been impossible for her to deny truthfully the existence of a little revengeful spirit that day.

It is said that woman is less forgiving than man, doubtless owing to her greater power of endurance, and to her more secluded life. Contact with the world leads to a study of human nature, which diffuses a more catholic spirit as we learn to comprehend it in its many phases, and overlook what seems at the moment inexplicable, confident that a knowledge of all the circumstances would materially change the aspect of affairs. Then Grace Blanche had met with no affliction since she was old enough to realize it, a school more powerful than any other to soften the feelings and educate them into a magnanimity that cannot afford to notice trifles. But this was not a trifle. Disappointed as she had been in the confidence placed in another, the effect of which made her a little inclined to think the whole world false, it was no light thing that this friend in whom she

trusted should treat her with coldness at the very moment she most needed sympathy. It was a most unfortunate thing for her that Mr. Livingston should have been called away at that time, since, had they met as usual afterwards, this little incident might have been forgotten.

On his return, her reserve excited no less surprise and regret on his part. His affections were intensely strong as his unwavering attachment to Rosalind proved, and the thought of this friendship being broken, pained him deeply. Again and again he tried to approach her with his wonted familiarity and was as often repulsed.

In the meantime Mr. Carleton improved his opportunity to regain the esteem he feared had been lowered through Mr. Livingston's influence. Keeping himself well informed of the movements of the latter, his absence was known to him sooner than to most of his friends, but it was sometime before he succeeded in ingratiating himself into her favor sufficiently to be on intimate terms as a friend. Miss Blanche never lost faith in Mr. Livingston's integrity which made her hesitate long, before surrendering herself again to the fascinating influence of Mr. Carleton. There was an irresistible desire to cling to something, and in desperation she yielded.

Never could a person show more tenderness and devotion than he, being capable of the most exalted emotions, though transient. There were gleams of a better nature rising within him, acted upon by the transcendent qualities of this pure and noble woman, which doubtless lessened her confidence in Mr. Liv-

ingston's impression of his character, and made her feel a little disposed to reproach him for it.

In the autumn previous, Mr. Carleton was taken sick, and for many weeks his life was despaired of. Though not his constant attendant, Miss Blanche was often by his bedside, and the attachment before existing was greatly strengthened. As he grew weaker, the higher elements of his nature were developed while the passions lay dormant, and even his foes yielded to the conviction that a change must have taken place which would transform him into a different character if his life should be spared. When able to talk, his fascinating gift of conversation shone forth with greater brilliancy than ever. As the disease began to abate, the physician recommended a winter residence at the South as the only means of fully restoring his impaired health, which brought to his side many of his former friends, eager to efface any disagreeable record they might have left of wanting friendship. Among this number Ernest Livingston did not appear, there being no occasion for it. He had never borne any malice toward the man, neither had he ever honored him with his friendship. This was sufficient to convince Grace Blanche that he had not changed his opinions concerning him.

Mr. Carleton left for the South as soon as he was able, keeping up a correspondence with her through the winter, yet nothing had ever been said of marriage. Doubts still existed in her mind of the propriety of her course, the responsibility of which she cast upon him who had it in his power to have prevented it if he had not forsaken her in the hour of

trial. This reflection preyed upon her more than usual the day of the great party, which gave rise to her excited feelings towards him then. She was playing on the piano when Ernest and Rosalind arrived that evening, the latter having been detained by company which made them late. Mr. Livingston was exceedingly fond of music, in which accomplishment Miss Blanche excelled, and she was performing the same difficult but exquisite part that won his admiration the first time he ever saw her. Could it be that she harbored an unkind feeling toward any human being, and especially toward him who had given her no cause of offence, thought Mr. Livingston, as the sound floated upward, making him feel that he could forgive the greatest personal injury ever committed by a human being. Probably not many among that brilliant throng would have shrunk from the same acknowledgment, listening as they were with the most intense enthusiasm to this melodious inspiration, scarcely knowing which were most fascinating, the thrilling notes of the music or the beauty and gracefulness of the player, enhanced now by the fervor of soul thrown into the performance.

He resolved to make another attempt, and speak to her as if nothing had happened when she rose from the piano, not doubting that amid the crowd of people and the exalting influences of the moment she would, like himself, banish all former distrust, and treat him at least courteously. But he miscalculated that time.

She experienced the opposite sensation. She knew when he entered, knew where he was standing,

and felt that he was listening to her admiringly, which fact contributed not a little to throw more spirit and fervor of soul into her performance. Its intimate association with their first meeting, brought to mind all the disagreeable incidents of the broken links of a once warm and generous friendship, which caused a greater alienation of feeling than before. She swept proudly by him, not so much as deigning to give him a look of condescension, displaying with such conscious intention as to arrest the attention of all eyes, which followed her as she rose. Rosalind looked wonderingly from her to Ernest, and from him to her. She saw an expression in his eyes which she never saw before, nor ever after. Hitherto, he had felt grieved, but not vexed. When his indignation was excited it was not easily quelled, until the cause was removed, if any existed, which he was determined to know in this instance, having been embarrassed by her enough, let it be what it might, and therefore resolved to seek the first opportunity to demand an explanation. He did not have to wait long. Evidently unhappy, the admiration she had excited was uncongenial to her feelings, and she stepped aside into a conservatory whither he followed her.

"Good evening Miss Blanche," said he, as he extended his hand, "I believe you did not recognize me as you passed by me."

Conventional in all her ways, she was surprised by this unexpected sally from one as conventional as herself. Mechanically giving him her hand, her eyes dropped, being too confused to reply.

Never did she look more charming in her queenly beauty, than when that delicate, rose-tinted blush betrayed a momentary lack of the self possession which seldom deserted her in any emergency. It was pleasant to feel the pressure of his hand once more, but what was to be done next? There they stood, liable at any moment to be surprised and embarrassed by others. He had not studied his lesson beforehand, and probably by this time was wishing himself out of the dilemma he had so unceremoniously rushed into. He let go her hand, and she looked up at him with a half smile, in her usual dignified manner. He smiled the smile she had once so much enjoyed. All bitterness melted away in an instant, and it is not known what explanation might have followed, but for the sudden announcement of Mr. Carleton which was as unexpected to her, as to the rest of the company. She turned deadly pale, and the interview was abruptly terminated.

She did not leave the conservatory for some time, remaining unobserved as she supposed, amid the dense mass of flowers and shrubbery, which gave it the character of an artificial garden. There she was struggling with the contending emotions of her soul, having just begun to tread that delicate labyrinth whose intricate windings would disclose a mine to fathom which, the brief space of twenty years had not given her the first sounding plummet. She was surprised to find that she did not even know herself. The very moment she felt the pressure of Mr. Livingston's hand all feeling of ill-will vanished, and

he was restored to her confidence, while his repulsion to Mr. Carleton was as sensibly communicated to her as if the latter had openly avowed himself in her presence the arrant hypocrite the former assumed him to be. If it is true that a woman's quick instinct empowers her to be an unerring criterion of character, there are so many controlling influences to modify it, unknown to herself, that it seldom acts with full force.

"What hastened you back so soon, Mr. Carleton?" said one of his friends, as they stood near the door of the conservatory, through which his observant eyes detected the object of his search ever since he entered the parlors.

"A little item of business, in fact a powerful magnet has attracted me here," said he with a significant wink, in a voice too low to be understood by Miss Blanche although the sound of his voice was instantly recognized by her. An involuntary shudder crept over her as she looked round for a chance of escape, and the next moment saw him advancing towards her.

"Why Miss Blanche, what is the matter, you are ill!" exclaimed he as he felt the icy touch of her hand, and observed her deathly pallor, at the same time throwing his arm around her to lead her to the open air. This act sent the blood coursing through her temples and restored her self possession. Remembering where she was, and how long she had been absent from the company, by a strong effort she succeeded in throwing a mask over her feelings so as to attract no attention during the rest of the

evening, except from Ernest Livingston, by whom she felt she was closely observed. Mr. Carleton did not leave her for an instant, although she tried in vain to assure him that she was not ill, hoping that he would leave her to herself.

"Those flowers," said he, "have delightful odors, but do you know that the fragrance of flowers in a close room is thought by some to be poisonous? That may have been the cause of your slight illness. If you will go with me to the sunny south," said he lowering his tone, and assuming his peculiar musical inflection of voice, "we can enjoy the beauty of flowers such as you never saw here, without suffering from their poisonous exhalations, as no hot-bed culture is needed there. And do you know that there is a wide field of usefulness for every woman who would employ most beneficently that higher order of talents with which God has endowed her, that she should beautify this world with noble works even as he has adorned it with flowers."

The siren voice had penetrated her soul. She looked up at him. What a beautiful light shone in his eyes! Oh, deceitful world!

\* \* \* \* \*

But, asks the reader, where is Amelia, is she still standing in the door? No, gentle reader, the spring day has closed and she is in her quiet little room again buried in the land of dreams. No broken friendship disturbs her thoughts,—she is not rich enough in this world's enjoyment for that; no lingering regret for the past pleasures never to be recalled,—she knows nothing of such experience.

That day, at least, has been one of tranquillity, one of calm, placid content, when she was willing to live in the present, and asked for nothing more.

Thank God for such days, for the rest they bring! and yet how soon we weary of them. Work, work for both mind and body, is what we crave, and none can be truly happy without it,—these little intervals are but preludes to a mightier effort.

Amelia dreamed of going to a wedding where she was to meet her mother, and after waiting and searching for her until the guests were nearly gone, learned that she had long since left in a carriage, leaving her to follow on foot. The disappointment awoke her when she found that mother she had none, with weddings she had nothing to do, and the disagreeable sensation of toiling on foot roused her to a consciousness of labor to be performed before she would be permitted to go to her mother. So she slept no more that night, and lay restlessly and anxiously devising some scheme that should satisfy the demands of what some call conscience, others the development of our own nature, while the nimble feet of the merry dancers in yonder mansion still kept time with the merrier music. There were those present who could sympathize with Amelia, those for whom the festivities of the hour had no charm, serving merely as safety valves to let off some of the pressure preying upon them in their luxurious homes.

Morning came at length when she must be up and doing, for this was to be a day of weariness and toil, doubly wearisome because the labor of her hands would be in such striking contrast with the current

of her thoughts. Her service was engaged to a lady who was neither a Grace Blanche, nor a Rosalind Claremont, but a person whose primordial existence reminded one of the latest fashion-plate. Doubtless she had her moments of aspiration after something higher, if any one was fortunate enough to detect them beneath the apparent heartlessness and shallow perceptions that the most superficial aims and worthless education could develop. How she might excel in dress was her paramount study, and this day had been selected for service in that department that she might avail herself of the great fashion emporium of the previous evening. The nervous exhaustion resulting from the excitement of that night, including some real or fancied slight from one whose flattering attentions she was particularly anxious to gain, made her unusually hard to please ; and Amelia, indifferent as she generally was, to praise or the lack of it, began to feel impatient at the total want of appreciation of her best endeavors to give satisfaction.

She was not the one to be pitied, however, for more harrowing sensations, more torturing anxieties, greater restlessness and weariness than she ever knew, tinctured the existence of this votary of fashion and pleasure. No sweet slumber came to her pillow as the blessed reward of wholesome toil, or the consciousness of making a single effort to make others happy. But judge her not harshly. Too many butterflies still flit in our pathway, who, like the transient sunbeams, dazzle with their brightness, but leave no radiance behind to cheer the day of sorrow, or lighten the cares of home. And yet how many instances

occur in which we are surprised at the strength of character and energy of will displayed by this same class when the illusions of youth have lost their charms, and a false education has exhausted its frivolities.

A great injury has been done to woman, for which she is not alone responsible, in cramping her intellect just at the period it is most active, when the excitement of school-life passes away, and she needs something to satisfy the insatiate craving of that most wonderful mechanism, the human mind. The attention of many deep thinkers has been turned to this point, and hence volumes of homilies by both sexes upon the duties and employments of unmarried women. Why should they not be written for unmarried men as well? Because society allows them to mark out a sphere for themselves. A man will always find enough to occupy his mind after completing the established routine of education, without hurrying into a premature marriage as a woman often does, to escape this oppressive blank in her existence. Aspiration is immortal, and every act which tends to silence it dwarfs the divine nature, and embitters the human.

There are crises in life from which few are exempt, when our only safety lies in a great overwhelming impulse, that shall draw us aside from the trouble draining the heart's life-blood, into some active channel where self is forgotten in the measure of responsibilities, which, in our disposal of them, lift us into that eternal future where our influence shall mould the ages, but in which we, as individuals, are but

atoms in the personal relations of joy and sorrow born of this world, and in this world to have an end.

We may engage in a benevolent operation to relieve present suffering, or by some act of self-sacrifice deserve a martyr's fame, without exciting that all-absorbing interest which calls into play the highest faculties of the soul, overpowering with their comprehensive sublimity petty trials of transient duration, in that exercise of faith and hope which carry us forward to those higher conceptions of the great purpose for which life was created, as impossible to gain in lives of frivolity and ease, as to be ignored in the safe combat with the waves of passion and prejudice flowing out of them. Responsibility,—a reaching forward to grasp momentous issues which extend beyond present interests, and embrace a wider field than our own individual necessities require, is an inevitable condition for the normal development of the spiritual nature of every man and woman.

## **CHAPTER XX.**

---

**"We shape ourselves the joy or fear  
Of which the coming life is made,  
And fill our Future's atmosphere  
With sunshine or with shade."**

"What will you bet?"

"The honor of my wife."

"You have no wife. Don't think you are going to come that game over me. I'm as much of a yankee as you are, born and reared in a yankee town."

"I'll come back to you within three months with the handsomest wife yankee land can produce, and whose life is as pure as a cotton ball before it is cursed by slave labor, for hang it Jim, since I went north I believe slave labor is accursed. Say, will you bet?"

"Bet? yes, I'll bet you that thousand dollars I've just won, and have it drawn up in writing. But a man of your character will never get a yankee girl of that stamp. They are too shrewd. You don't know 'em as I do. You judge 'em by the character of our southern women which may be pure enough for anything I know, but by thunder they'd all have to live old maids if they should be as particular as they are up north. I'd as soon live in a straight jacket as be cooped up with one of them all my days, and a man wants his liberty sometimes; you know that. That's the charm of southern life to which

you are not altogether insensible, if your northern life does make you a little sensitive on that point."

"I'll bet you a thousand dollars drawn up in writing that I can do as I said, bring you the handsomest, and the most innocent woman you ever saw, as my wife too, and we'll have the writings drawn up this afternoon and I'll set off to-morrow."

"Bring the certificate with you that we may know the banns have been proclaimed, for that is so unlike you to go up north to marry a puritan when there are so many southern beauties languishing for you, that I shall not take your word for it."

"Will you stake your thousand dollars? for I am in earnest."

"I see you are terribly in earnest, and I begin to repent for the girl's sake. I say Bill; it's too bad for you to palm yourself off on an innocent girl. I don't care for these loose characters that would just as lief share their nest with a quadroon as any way, but it's rather more'n I should want to answer for to set a snare for an innocent victim."

"Take care how you impeach my character or I'll have you up for defamation. I'll stand by my word, and if you don't, I'll send you a challenge!"

"That was a losing game for you, and for my part I wish we hadn't played it. Suppose now I share it with you, I'll give you five hundred back again if that will settle the matter."

"No money will settle it. You must either take my word or accept my challenge."

"Well then the guilt be on your head for I will wash my hands of it. Squire Tomkins will come in

from over the way and satisfy you as to the claims for I don't want any thing said about it. I will draw up a paper and he shall witness our signatures, so that it shall be binding to your satisfaction."

One of the characters in the preceding pages will be readily recognized as Mr. Carleton who had lost heavily in a gambling operation with a fellow rogue in broadcloth. Both of them had too much of the northern element of refinement in their natures to mingle promiscuously with southern society, and the Yankee born was not yet so lost to the early teachings of his childhood as to yield unscrupulously to the worst principles of southern depravity. The other, judged by his early education, was not any lower in the scale of morality.. There is scarcely a man so depraved that he has not a redeeming trait somewhere, through which he feels instinctively a certain degree of reverence for a noble and virtuous woman. While one scrupled at the thought of violating what was left of his dim perceptions of honor, the other justified himself by indulging that spark of manly feeling which really glowed in his bosom at the thought that he might win the love of so pure a being, which ought to refute the charge his friend brought against his character, and which had really incensed him to persevere.

The result was his sudden exit, and his sudden appearance on the evening alluded to. After leaving home, when his anger had time to cool, and reason to return, so many doubts arose in his mind about being able to accomplish his purpose within the time specified, if at all, that he lost no spare moments in

devising schemes for his success. Very discreet in his blandishments and reasonable in his propositions, the innocent heart was beguiled and the first day of June was appointed to celebrate their nuptials. He would gladly have hastened it sooner, but yielding to her feelings of regret at the thoughts of leaving her northern home, he deferred it as long as possible, and really acted honestly in doing so. There was an irresistible charm about him when he gave full play to his higher nature that would justify the confidence of as pure-minded a woman as Grace Blanche. She tried hard to forget that any cause ever existed to doubt his sincerity, but since the night she received Mr. Livingston back to her friendship, she felt the strength of his former influence. They met seldom now, and he never mentioned the subject, feeling that it was too late. He could only hope that a reformation had taken place, and she might be happy in her new relation. It was a source of regret that she was to leave the city, but southern corruption had not been so fully revealed then as now, and no one thought of raising that question as an objection to her departure, either in relation to her happiness or his deportment. Her numerous friends sent their congratulations, past rumors were forgotten, and all seemed to go merrily as a marriage bell, save that leaden weight at her heart.

The bloom faded from her cheek, but elicited no comment. The wedding day came, the ceremony was performed, and the bridal couple were cheered with all the good wishes it was possible for loving friends to shower upon them. Ernest Livingston

happened accidentally to be the last person of whom she took leave, whose hand she pressed long and tenderly, mentally asking his forgiveness for the coldness she had once shown him. The grasp was returned, he saying in a low tone, as Mr. Carleton stepped one side, "Remember that I shall always be your friend."

This remark was wholly unpremeditated, and was no sooner made than regretted for its seeming impropriety. Although it might be understood as a guaranty on his part against any future broken friendship, it sprung from no such source, and was quickly construed by Mrs. Carleton as an ill- portending omen. Of a tumultuous character were her bridal anticipations, neither unmixed with regrets nor without the charm of an all-confiding love.

## **CHAPTER XXI.**

---

“Who, looking backward from his manhood’s prime,  
Sees not the spectre of his misspent time;  
And through the shade  
Of funeral cypress, planted thick behind,  
Hears no reproachful whisper on the wind  
From the loved dead!”

The first year of Walter’s college life drew to a close, and Rosalind was full of joyous anticipations, laying every plan with reference to his return, and neglecting no means her imagination could suggest to enhance the pleasure of his visit with agreeable surprises. Her mother and Ernest were equally joyful, but her enthusiasm cast their’s into the shade. If they started a new idea, she was sure to add something to it which would increase the interest of the occasion. Ernest was very eager to add one to the list of her surprises, in which she could have no share being as much of a surprise to her as to Walter, if he could do it without at the same time giving her pain.

This was the presentation of her picture which had long been finished, and carefully veiled from all eyes except his own. She was so sensitive to the most indirect allusion to that unhappy occurrence between them, that he had not even ventured to give her any pond lilies.

After considerable deliberation, he decided that

the greatest kindness towards her would be to help her overcome this needless shrinking from recurrence to an event which was not worth a painful thought, and which had long since lost every painful association. He gathered some lilies, of which a few yet remained, and presented them to her the day before Walter's return. Notwithstanding an effort to appear grateful for them, an expression of pain flitted over her features.

"Rosalind," said Ernest in a serious tone, "why should those lilies, or any reminiscence of last summer's experience cause you or me an unpleasant sensation? Do you think you are alone in needlessly disturbing your own peace by a thoughtless act? If so, he who now stands before you can relate a personal experience as much more painful than yours as it is more impossible to retrieve an error with the dead than with the living."

Startled from her motionless attitude, the lilies dropped from her hands upon the table, and she gave him a look of surprise, saying, "You, Ernest?"

"Yes. I had a mother once, as kind, as devoted as yours, and I loved her as intensely as a child could love a parent, which she returned by treating me as a companion, rather than as a son over whom she might exercise a parent's control. Our lives in this matter very much resembled yours here, and perhaps my youth was as blameless as Walter's. My mother's health was always delicate, though never such as to excite alarm. I never left her until I went to college. I know now the struggle it must have cost her to part with me, but I did not realize it then. As full

of joyous anticipations as Walter at the thought of the new paths of science I was about to tread, I scarcely cast a lingering regret behind me, and she summoned her fortitude to bid me a cheerful good bye, saying it was needless to caution me against falling into bad habits, a compliment of which I was justly proud. Then she wrote me such beautiful letters which I always answered promptly. Before I was aware, the temptations of college life were undermining my fixed principles of conduct, and in a thoughtless moment I yielded to opportunities to which once I would not have thought of listening. Convinced of my folly before really committing anything bad, had it not been for the associations connected with it, probably it would have left no lasting impression. I consented to join a party of students in high life, for what purpose I knew not, except that they were to meet for a convivial frolic, which needed no nice interpretation to foresee its character among such a set of fellows as those who first proposed it. Not requested to assist in the preparations, probably knowing I was not sufficiently initiated for that, they merely asked me to be present as a guest. At first my conscience hesitated a little, but it soon became quieted with the reflection that there was no necessity to set myself above others who were to be present, the sons of clergymen and professional men of the highest respectability in the land, not thinking that perhaps they were taking their first lessons in the downward career of vice. I cannot imagine now, how it was possible for me to have remained a whole hour in the presence of such conduct as I there

witnessed ; how I could have sanctioned for a moment such utter violation of the laws of the institution, and every principle of correct habits and a refined taste. Being unaccustomed to such scenes I must have been dazzled, bewildered at what I saw, and the congratulations I heard passing from lip to lip that I was one of their number. How they ever managed so secretly as to carry out their plan successfully without being detected, has always been a mystery. Making no secret of it among themselves, as the champagne was freely passed around the circle the toast to one and another of the Faculty was drunk, boasting of the delicious fowls their granaries had contributed to their bacchanalian feast, and exulting over the depletion of the kitchen larder. Suddenly, as vividly as if she had stood there before me to utter them, the last words of my mother when standing in the doorway to give me her parting benediction occurred to my mind. ‘There is no need to caution you against falling into bad habits.’

“I rose instantly from the table, leaving the meal untasted, and hastened to my room. The suddenness of my departure probably stupified their wonder as they made no effort to detain me, or seek an explanation. There I found a letter written in a strange hand, announcing the sudden illness of my mother, who desired my presence immediately. The anxiety of that night and the upbraidings of conscience I will not attempt to describe. To go from such a debasing scene as I had just left, to the death bed of my beloved mother, seemed like tainting the pure air of heaven with the malarious exhalations of

some noxious pit. Then I recollect my neglect in answering her last letter, the first instance of the kind. Why it was I could not tell; but as if a lightning flash had come from heaven to reveal me unto myself, I saw at once how the excitements of my new life were fast blunting the acute perceptions of my moral nature, and how rapidly, yet unconsciously, my conscience was becoming seared. The next morning as soon as I could obtain conveyance, I started for home, arriving at nightfall, but not until the vital spark had fled. All day I had been revolving the question in my mind how I should meet her with that sense of guilt on my soul; whether to confess it or spare her last hours the pain of that disclosure. Facing my sin alone in that chamber of death, what would I not have given for one short hour to pour into her ears the tale of my contrition, and hear from her lips the sweet words of forgiveness. No such comfort remained. No more loving words of hers would ever again bring sunlight to my soul, and henceforth, through the stormy waves that had come thus early to buffet me, no beacon smile of joy would lead me in triumph, nor tender admonition warn me of danger. I now thought I could not live. The loss of my mother alone seemed too hard to bear, and the addition of this terrible burden of remorse seemed hell itself.

For months I wandered in my restless agony without being able to fix my mind on any kind of business, or participate in any pleasure. Abandoning all thoughts of completing my collegiate course, I resolved to make a tour in the old world to visit its

curiosities, and if possible, divert my attention from such useless regrets. While there I visited a studio of one of the most eminent Italian artists, where a painting of extraordinary excellence riveted my gaze. Such exquisite coloring and perfect representation of natural beauty, such life-like delineation of human character I never before observed. There were several groups in the picture, each representing different phases of life, one of which particularly attracted me, which I still remember as if it were but yesterday. An old lady sat bonneted and shawled in the corner, with spectacles resting on the tip of her nose, watching with concealed merriment a group of young persons who were trying to manage something they did not understand, and evidently wishing her out of the way. The scornful expression of their lips as they glanced backward to see if she were looking at them, and their uneasy glances at each other showed as plainly as words could express, that they knew she could give them all the information desired, the thought of receiving which from her they spurned. The scene was evidently intended to represent the old adage, "Young folks think old folks are fools, and old folks know young ones are," which was most clearly illustrated in the chuckling expression of the old lady's face. Though out of keeping with the current of my thoughts, it suggested to me the idea, "Why not be an artist?" What a thrill went through me at that moment! It seemed like a monitor from heaven sent to calm my troubled soul by leading it to that eternal sense of Beauty which is the source of all inspiration,

forming an indissoluble bond between man and his Creator; as it is through it the divine perceptions are shadowed forth in visible types of the Infinite, and recognized by a corresponding artistic combination of the immortal attributes of the human soul. I immediately engaged myself as a pupil under the instruction of one of the most celebrated masters, and succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations. After sufficient practice, I undertook a sketch of my mother from memory. I was advised not to make the attempt as it would probably prove a failure and dampen my ardor. But my soul was alive with the idea, and nothing could deter it. Here my anticipations were also realized, and the result was a most perfect representation of her features and expression. Even the eyes beamed with the serene radiance of faith and hope which constituted such a beautiful feature of her daily life. That picture has ever since been my guiding star to lead me to a higher life. In it I read the sweet words of forgiveness so much desired, and the loving spirit of charity needed to make me lenient toward the faults of erring humanity. Formerly I had been too exacting, holding others to the rigid standard I proposed to myself, and expected to carry out, which is well if done in the right spirit. As I found in my own experience, no person knows his own power to withstand surrounding influences until exposed to the temptation. That mercy we ask for ourselves we must show unto others, and judge them by their different temperaments and comparative education and advantages. After sufficiently qualifying my-

self for my profession, I spent two years at a University in Germany and then returned to my native land. My good fortune brought me to this place just before I formed your acquaintance, and the rest you know. I have long wished to make this relation, not only for the relief it brings, to make another the confident of our secret sorrow, but also to show you how little we know of the faults of the wisest and best in some unguarded moment of their lives, and how our errors as well as our virtues, may be the stepping-stone to a higher order of perfection."

The sympathy excited in Rosalind by this narration imparted an unwonted degree of tenderness which shone in every act and word through the day. The admiration before felt for Ernest was increased to unbounded reverence, feeling the force of his implied admonition to reconcile her to herself and the world. A new expression appeared on her countenance, not physically so animated, but more spiritually beautiful, which betokened a calm pensiveness of experience as if she had opened a new page in the book of life, interesting as well as affecting, and prophetic of life's great purpose.

This infused more of seriousness in Walter's reception, than she had anticipated, but not in such a manner as to impair the enjoyment of the occasion, rather enhancing its interest. When the other surprises were over, Ernest improved a favorable opportunity to bring on his.

Walter and Rosalind were quietly chatting together on the sofa after tea, when he entered with a picture which he handed to Walter, saying, "Here is a

present for Rosalind which is intended to surprise you both." Turning to her he said, "Let no unpleasant associations connected with it disturb you, for I want you to cherish it as I do, among the sweetest memories of life. If it shall remind us of suffering let us remember that it is through suffering the soul reveals her noblest gifts."

Walter unveiled the picture, and jumped up with a joyful exclamation of surprise, holding it before the astonished eyes of Rosalind which were soon suffused with tears at this unexpected feature of the programme. Quickly suppressing them, she arose without speaking and approached Ernest, throwing her arms around his neck and kissing him in such a natural, child-like manner as to bring fresh to mind the memory of those happy days when the child and the father walked together in such close and loving companionship, not without their trials, yet blessed in the end.

Walter's buoyant spirit was yet unclouded by trials. Affectionate and deferential as when a child, he exhibited a self-reliance which sought no outside guidance, yet so gentle and submissive in its nature that it sought instinctively the protecting panoply of a mother's blessing. The moral firmness of his character shone conspicuously amid the temptations of his new life, never for a moment swerving from the path of duty. Even the most reckless and unprincipled of his classmates loved and honored him for his genial temper, frankness of manners, and the resolute stand he maintained in opposition to their habits and vices.

## **CHAPTER XXII.**

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"Link by link the chain is made,  
Pearl by pearl the costly braid,—  
The daily thread of hopes and fears,  
Weaves up the woof of many years.—  
And well thy labors shall have sped,  
If well thou weav'st thy daily thread."

A far more important event than anything that occurred at home awaited Walter's return from college. James Morgan's year of probation drew to a close. Just a year from the night they had the interview, he sat down and wrote the following letter:

"My own beloved Mary,—One year ago to-night I pledged myself before God, in the presence of Walter Claremont, that I would never again touch the intoxicating cup. Through divine help and your influence, Mary, I have kept the pledge. You may call it selfish, but I never should have had the strength to do it if it had not been for you. Many, many times should I have yielded to my craving thirst, but for the agonizing thought of being separated from you forever. Mary, my angel guide, I will conceal nothing from you, so that you shall never have it to say that I deceived you. All my bad deeds you know, and my struggles against temptation will not certainly lower me in your eyes, especially when I have triumphed over them.

One Saturday night it seemed to me I could not live through another Sunday without some kind of excitement. That is the hardest day I have, because

it gives me the most leisure. Mr. Brewster and his wife with whom I board are very kind to me, and do every thing they can for my happiness. They give me a plenty of books to read, and invite me to share the society of all the company they have, as much as if I were one of the family, but what is all that compared with one letter to read of your handwriting, Mary, or an hour spent with you? As I lay there thinking it over, and longing for a sight at you, or a talk with Walter which you know was impossible because he was away at college, it suddenly occurred to me that I would slip over to Briar Street Church where you go, the next day, and see if I couldn't get a glimpse of you, Mary, it would do me so much good. It was leaping over the bounds I know, and running the risk of meeting my old associates, some of whom go there, but God protected me; I did not see one of them. I kept out of sight until all the congregation had gone in, and then I went in and sat down on the back seat where nobody could see me. I could just get a sight at your bonnet, that pretty little white bonnet trimmed with pink and white ribbon that you know I liked so well, Mary. Once when you turned your head round I got a side glimpse of your face. Oh Mary! that did me more good than all the preaching of twenty years against drinking could have done. I felt as if you would not disappoint me, I knew you wouldn't; and when you leaned your head on your hand, I knew you were praying for me, and I prayed for myself.

Never did music sound so sweet before. I felt as if I was wafted on the wings of angels to a better land where all temptation was swept away, and you and I could be perfectly happy in each other's love. Oh my own dear Mary! I am afraid this is too much to think, that I shall never be permitted to realize it. I know I am not worthy of you, that a whole life-

time is not enough to atone for my sins, and I could not blame you if—oh no, I cannot think of that. Do trust me, Mary.

Never since that day have I had such a strong thirst; you overpowered it. My destiny is in your hands,—you will not cast me off. I do not doubt it Mary, only I want it from your own lips that you love me still, and will now become my wife. That has been a blessed thought to me, and my greatest support. If I could keep steady by thinking of you how much more can I do it by being with you. Perhaps you will think I should have done it before, but you do not know how hard it is to resist, when everybody around me was urging me just to drink a little, and then I loved it so and wanted more. I did it without thinking what the end would be. Oh! the cursed viper! how it has maddened and tortured me.

Now you will let me come and see you, won't you? Walter is at home and will take this letter to you. God bless him for what he has done for me. He will bring me word what you say, but I know what you will say. I know you will keep your word, only it seems almost too good to be true that I shall soon see you, and hear you say with your own sweet lips that you still love me

JAMES MORGAN.

It was a grave responsibility resting on Walter, to be in any way concerned in the future destiny of this young couple. He had kept up a correspondence with James, and written occasionally to Mr. Brewster whom he had partially acquainted with the circumstances, in order to know better how he kept his promises. The answers he received were very satisfactory.

After he had called on James and taken charge of this letter for Mary, it was a subject of grave discussion between himself and his mother, Ernest and

Rosalind, how far it would be wise for him to act as negotiator between them.

"I almost wish," said his mother, "that you had never been mixed up with it, although it was a noble motive that prompted you. Her father is bitterly opposed to the union, and he thinks it is broken off. Perhaps he will turn her out of doors, or lock her up, if she should receive James again, he is such a furious man when angry."

"Suppose he should, I do not see how I could have done otherwise, or how I can refuse to act for them now. I have never advised Mary, of course I should not be so weak as that, but when she made a friend of me and asked my assistance, how could any body help doing for Mary Kingley? Neither would it be honorable for her to break her word with him and refuse to see him, when he has faithfully performed the conditions she required for her sake."

"She will run a great risk even now" said Ernest. "It is one thing to deny himself the gratification of his appetite when the prize is to be won, and another to persevere against all temptation when the die is cast, and he knows, let come what will, there is no longer any outward barrier to restrain him."

"Why, it would be the most cruel thing in the world for her not to have him now when he has given her all the proof he can of his repentance and reform. That love is not worth much that is not willing to trust something."

The slight tone of rebuke conveyed in these impressive words of Rosalind, and the earnestness and enthusiasm with which she uttered them, excited such

a comical smile on the lips of Ernest, that when she glanced at him her face and neck were mantled in crimson. Nothing more was said then upon the subject, and Walter, who agreed most heartily with Rosalind, acted according to his own convictions, and carried the letter over to Mary the next morning.

As he was ushered into the parlor he met her father in the hall just going out, who, hearing his daughter's name called, gave him a cordial grasp, saying,

"Good morning to ye sir, very glad to see ye sir. You'll always be welcome to my house and to my — well, we'll talk about that by and by sir. Ye are pretty young yet, but there's some folks a good deal older'n others at the same age. Hain't got through with your college larnin' yet I 'spose. Well, that's a fine thing to git a good eddication, may be you'll be President yet and beat old Adams all holler. Well, they say, every dog must have his day, and he'll have hisen, I 'spose, but we shall oust him out at the next 'lection, that's sure. Mary 's a fine gal, a fine gal, and will make one of the genteeldest ladies in the land."

Walter was somewhat embarrassed by this ambiguous speech, but he walked into the parlor without making any reply. Mary did not make her appearance until her father was gone. Though very pale when she entered, she grew more so on receiving the letter, the handwriting of which she immediately recognized. Thinking his presence might be an intrusion at this time, Walter took his leave, saying he would call again the next day, and asking her if she

had any choice when. After pausing a moment she said, "To-morrow morning at ten."

She could scarcely have felt worse on returning to her chamber if that letter had been her death-warrant. It lay in her lap many minutes unopened. The crisis had come, a crisis as it were between life and death. She never faltered a moment as to her duty, nor wavered in her attachment, but she knew as well as Ernest the difference between maintaining self-imposed restraints when there is an object to be gained, and after the conditions requiring them no longer exist. Then reproaching herself for indulging in such a doubtful strain instead of rejoicing over its contents, which she assumed to be what they really were, she began to read it. The tears came thick and fast, causing her to stop many times before it was finished. Stronger than any other consideration rose the all conquering power of love. If she refused him, not only would she incur the risk of his ruin, but carry within her own soul the blight occasioned by the sealing up of her young heart's affections, which would render it callous to every other human love. A sensation of joy and hope, such as those only can know who have witnessed the rescue of a dear one from some imminent danger and anxiously watched the signs of returning consciousness, swept away every emotion of doubt and fear, and her soul rose in thanksgiving to Him who is the source of every joy. As the dinner hour approached she thought of her father and the difficulties that awaited her in gaining his consent, who had always been an indulgent parent, and

therefore it would be a much harder struggle to act counter to his wishes. He did not come home until tea-time. At table he looked at Mary with a very benignant smile saying, "Well my bonnie lass, you had a call from Master Claremont this morning didn't you? He's a fine lookin' youngster, improved very much since he's been gone, and many's the gal that'll envy you my lass, but be sure you keep your eye on the money, that's the main pint ye know."

"Father, I don't understand you, what do you mean?"

"All right, all right, Mary, it's perfectly nat'r'al that you should feel a little shy about it; that's the way your mother did, and when I went up and put my arm round her so, she acted as if she wanted to get away, but I guess she never had reason to be sorry she married Nicolas Kingley, if he was a poor boy, and had to make his way up in the world, did ye, eh! Poll?"

"Then I suppose you will have no objection to James Morgan, now he is steady?"

He started as if a revolver had whistled past his ears.

"Jim Morgan, the wretch, have you seen him?"

"No, I have not seen him."

"Then you shall not see him so long as you live in this house! No! my daughter shan't disgrace my name by marrying a drunkard's son, whether he is drunk or sober; no, never!" bringing his fist down with such force upon the table as to shatter in pieces a very delicate and curiously designed vase standing upon it.

Mary's resolution was not to be shaken. As an act of duty, it was no more than she ought to do to atone for the wrong he had done James. Though never lacking in filial respect, she was not so blinded by indulgence as not to see in its true colors the misery her father had wrought.

The next morning she rose early and looked out at her chamber window, which commanded a romantic view. Hills and vales alternated here and there with a sheet of water which found an inlet from the main stream ; manufacturing establishments rose in proud preeminence above the little low-roofed cottages, that seemed to start up wherever there was a convenient spot of ground to erect one ; and the children, some half-dressed, were vying with each other to see who of them would venture nearest the forbidden stream.

Just opposite the window lay the rural cemetery in the bosom of a beautiful grove bordering on the lake. Mary looked at the white gate she had so often seen swung back to admit the funeral procession, bearing hither some precious treasure that had been the abode of white-robed innocence, torturing disease, or loathesome sin, whose spirit had gone to the bar of its final Judge, freed from the prejudices, the temptations, and the ills of its earthly career, to receive its due reward from the measure of impartial justice ; subject only to Him in the light of whose all-seeing eye every secret shall be revealed, and every motive clearly read. She looked beyond the tomb, and felt that life is but a few years, a speck in the balance of eternity, but love is immortal. What-

ever changes might betide her, if, in surrendering herself to it, she should reap a life of wretchedness and want, because he in whom she trusted had not strength to resist the overpowering influences of this world, might he not when taken from them become again the pure and loving spirit he now is? Her present duty she saw and would perform it; the future she must trust to God. Oh Love! what magic is thine! no barrier so great but thou cans't o'erleap it! She took her Bible and read a chapter before going down to breakfast. Vanquished was every trace of earthly anguish, and her father's averted look had no terrors for her now. The meal was eaten in silence.

As Mr. Kingley rose to go out she said to him,  
“ Father, may I speak with you a moment ? ”

“ You know what I told you last night,” and his voice grew husky with rage, “ if you consent to see James Morgan, you leave this house forever ! I am in earnest.”

Mary was prepared for this, and preserved her composure. She saw that her only alternative was to take her father at his word and quit the house. Where to go was the question, but she must leave that to be decided when Walter came. Every moment was now needed to make the hasty preparations for her departure leaving no time for reflection or regret. The canary birds in her window sung their liveliest songs, striving to drown the music of the little birds who sang on the apple tree boughs, but she scarcely breathed a sigh at the thought that it was in all probability the last time she would ever

listen to their sweet notes, or that the step she was about to take would sever her forever from her childhood's home. Hark ! what is that she hears ? A light foot is on the stairs, a soft voice is in her ear ; her mother stands before her. " Oh Mary, you will not leave *me* will you ? "

It was hard to answer that pleading. Mary was the only sunbeam that had cheered that poor woman's existence since she had led a married life.

Thwarted in her early love by the opposition and interference of her friends, she had accepted Mr. Kingley out of revenge on them, which, alas ! fell most heavily on herself. Neither bringing him any love, or receiving any in return, she was borne down under a despotic rule which was submitted to only because she must. Her sympathies were all with Mary, whose trials called up a painful reminiscence of her own bitter experience, but in the loneliness of her heart at the thought of being separated from her, she almost chided her for permitting another love to step between them. Mary looked at her for a few moments with those trusting, modest blue eyes of hers, now beaming with the celestial glow of spiritual triumph, saying, " Mother, it is not all of life to live ; the future is beyond. Whatever happiness we are deprived of in this life, we shall certainly reap hereafter if we do our duty ; or if we commit an error, shall not he who has himself shared our weakness, out of that unbounded mercy which it was his mission to preach here on earth, bear us in remembrance to the Throne of pardoning grace, where all sins shall be blotted out when, like the prodigal son,

we feel the magnitude of our transgression, and return confidently to the loving Father's arms who never casts us off, but in tender compassion guards us pityingly from the pit our own hands have dug?"

She little thought as she said these last words which had reference to James, how exactly they applied to her mother. Such a devoted, forgiving nature as hers could never have understood those darker passions which would hazard its own purity and integrity in the strife between its own promptings and the malicious designs of others. Mrs. Kingley's heart was full. It seemed as if a new elixir of life quickened her pulse and sent its healing balm through every pore. She said no more to dissuade Mary, but lent her assistance in many little things that she understood best how to manage, without asking a word of her plans and intentions. The trunk was packed and Mary was ready at ten o'clock when Walter came. She met him with a smile, calm and self-possessed. He had the forethought to ask his mother's leave to invite her there to meet James, if it should be deemed advisable, so that point was soon settled to Mary's great relief. At eleven the hack came, when she bade adieu to her childhood's home.

As her mother asked no questions she thought it best to give her no information of her destination, thus enabling Mrs. Kingley to reply to her husband's inquiries that they had held no private interview. She gave her a long and affectionate embrace, leaving a message for her father that she had acted solely on her own responsibility, without asking or receiving the advice of any human being.

It was not without some misgivings Mr. Kingley came home to dinner that day, some vague suspicion that he should not find Mary there. When convinced that she was really gone, his rage knew no bounds. He cursed and swore, charging his wife with being accessory to her plans. When told that all she knew about it was that a hack came and took her away, he said, "And so you let her go all peaceably did you? Why didn't ye send after me you cussed hussy? If you'd 'a gone instead of her it would have been the most fortunate day of my life."

He never thought that Mary would dare to go off, his threats being intended to prevent James from coming there. His pride forbade his making any farther inquiries for her, and he settled down morose and reserved.

An arrangement was made for James to go to Mrs. Claremont's that evening. A great change had taken place in his looks in one year. His large, handsome eyes had recovered their natural, innocent expression, and his erect bearing and reliant step bespoke a noble purpose, and the decision to carry it out.

How Mary's heart fluttered as she beheld with becoming pride the manly form who had wrestled with a greater foe than ball or sword had ever slain, and spoke the sacred words of more than usual solemnity to her, "I will be thine forevermore."

Under the circumstances it was agreed that it would not be best to defer the marriage more than a month. When Walter and his mother were holding

a consultation about her remaining there, Rosalind, as usual, decided the question.

"Oh yes, let her stay here and I will help her get ready; and let them be married here, and Walter and I will stand up with them."

"Perhaps Mary will prefer to choose her own bridesmaid," said Walter, laughing.

James wisely decided to remain where he was, and hired a little cottage of Mr. Brewster, near his own residence, where they were to set up house-keeping on a small scale, their means being very limited, but it was for them the most attractive little home, which they would not have exchanged for a palace.

There was a plenty to absorb Rosalind's energies. She worked incessantly from early morning till late at night, and assumed the whole charge of the wedding preparations, having great practical business talent. This was a great help to Mary, who needed the assistance of some one, when contending with so many unpleasant recollections, that she would gladly have foregone all needless ceremony. But Rosalind was not to be put off. Marriage, she said, was something that did not take place every day, and ought to be properly observed. She insisted on getting her a white muslin, to correspond with one of her own, so they might be dressed alike; and white, she said, was the only color suitable for a bride. Mary consented with her sweet, pensive smile, though protesting all the while that she should never wear it afterwards. She did wear it to Rosalind's wedding.

James came over and took tea with her every Sun-

day afternoon, a custom which Ernest also observed, so that was a joyous night at Orange Grove.

Mrs. Claremont enjoyed it, Walter enjoyed it, and a stranger looking on must have enjoyed the sight of so much happiness. It is seldom we see three young men associated, of such interesting appearance, pure and refined tastes as Ernest, James and Walter. One must feel sure in looking at them and reading their frank, honest countenances, that if either of them committed an error, it was the fault of the head and not of the heart.

Those were halcyon days to all the parties,—days which came back to the memory like the golden tinge of sunset on the fleecy cloud after the fervid glow of the noontide heat. Like all other days these must have an end, and this soft, summer hour of twilight give way to the reality of earnestness with which we must enter the arena of life and accept both its sunshine and its shadows. The wedding day arrived. There was no invited guest save Ernest, and all went on quietly and serenely as that smiling summer day.

## **CHAPTER XXIII.**

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“All the world’s a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits, and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts.”

How often it happens when looking forward to a particular event with a certain degree of pleasure, by some capricious freak of the nervous system our prospects are defeated, and we experience the reverse of what we anticipated. It was thus with Rosalind on Mary Kingley’s wedding day. The cares she had assumed for the last month had been somewhat exhausting, and the thoughts of her own approaching bridal agitated her as she and Walter accompanied them to the parlor. Just as the ceremony was about to commence, Milly, who was sitting by the side of Ernest, whispered to him, “Now you can see how you and Rosalind will look when you stand up.”

The oddity of this remark in the midst of the solemnity of the occasion, so out of keeping with her accustomed reserve, especially towards him, excited an involuntary smile, which, observed by Rosalind, brought back to her cheeks the color that had momentarily forsaken them.

The usual salutations passed, when Ernest, being in a playful humor, and amused by her childish perturbations kissed her instead of the bride, which

heightened the flush on her cheeks, and gave rise to a merry laugh all round.

The cake was passed, but not the wine, and before the evening shadows gathered, the happy couple were enjoying themselves quietly in their own neat little parlor, where they were soon visited by Deacon Brewster and his wife, who came to offer their congratulations, bringing with them a refreshing draught of iced lemonade.

"What a pity," said Kate, as the carriage rolled down the avenue, "when the minister was all here and every thing was ready, that it shouldn't have been all done up and saved the trouble of gettin' up another marryin'."

"You looked as white as a ghost, and trembled like a frightened bird when you took my arm," said Walter to Rosalind after they returned to the parlor, where she stood nervously opening and shutting her fan, looking neither grieved, vexed nor pleased, but the personification of childish helplessness, mutely appealing from one to the other without receiving the assistance it craved.

"And I stood on tiptoe ready to get the smellin' salts if you should faint," remarked Kate, intruding her head in the doorway.

"They do not know what it is to be so near becoming a bride do they," observed her mother, who was immediately succeeded by Walter with the remark,

"I guess, sis, you wish you hadn't been quite so officious to act a prominent part in the play yourself,—rather too real, wasn't it?"

"I never felt so bad in my life," replied she in an earnest, emphatic tone.

"Oh yes you have," said Ernest, in that quiet, significant way of his, the meaning of which Rosalind comprehended, when one of her sudden impulses seized her, and she thrust herself unceremoniously into his lap, pulling one of his curls with such force that he was obliged to interfere in its defence.

Milly laughed at this unexpected turn of affairs and left the room. She had enjoyed the day greatly, and was thinking now how she could appropriate some of its incidents to her novel. Going to her chamber, she found it already occupied by Kate, whose mind was busily manufacturing weddings on a scale to suit herself.

"Now Milly," said Kate after singing a snatch of a song, for she never sung a whole one, "wouldn't it be a capital joke if we could get you married off next. Such a funny thing, if the author of a novel should knock the whole thing in head by gettin' married herself. Ye wouldn't find it quite such a moonshiny affair I reckon, as what ye make it out in your novel. Well now, we are in the business, I want to describe Sykes' weddin'. That was a most magnificent affair, and would be a mighty takin' thing for your book. But before that I must tell you some of his renounters with miskeeturs, cause you know when a person's married it's just the same as if they was dead. I shouldn't want to bring him up afterwards."

"I hope you don't think you are going to impose that thing on me. I never believed there was any

such person as Sykes, and you'd have told of his marriage before now if there were. I don't care about hearing a description of it."

"Nonsense Milly, there's no use in being so offish about it. You've got to hear about Sykes' weddin', whether you want to or not, it was such a magnificent affair. He used to love to take a nap out doors in the yard and I used to love to plague him, and he'd always think 'twas the miskeeturs. Sometimes I'd sprinkle water in his face, and when he got up I'd ask him if he had a good nap, and he'd snarl up his face like a knot, and say, 'Yes if it hadn't been for them tarnal critturs.'"

"Why Sykes!" says I, "what if you should get that word into your sermons, you never'd get a culprit's place in the world. Now he was very fond of English titles, he always thought he descended from the English, which gin him a sort of nobility in his own eyes, and he'd rather have the title of culprit than minister."

"Curate, you mean," retorted Milly.

"No matter, it's all the same, if they could only get the money."

"Where did it take place, in a shed or a palace?"

"Hush, Milly, you forgot yourself. You shouldn't make light of sober things, and that was awfully solemn. But then it was such a magnificent affair there had to be some extensive preparations about it. In them days, 'twan't a great while ago though, but you know in country towns they have some extra buildin's for school'ouses, and so it was thought best to lease one o' them for the occasion, and it was fitted up in

the most fittin' style for such a magnificent affair. In them days, oh 'twan't long ago though, school'-ouses were built in a plain substantial style, with rough, wooden benches, and Sykes, he had a good deal of taste and he thought that wouldn't exactly correspond, and so he had 'em covered with black drapery. Now he was such a simple, honest-hearted soul he didn't know the difference between a weddin' and a funeral, and it strikes me there wouldn't be so much disappointment in the world if folks ginerally took that rational view of it. Now Sykes, he had a good deal of taste, and was very fond of flowers so he had wreathes of sun-flowers all round the room, and he made a great boquet of sun-flowers he meant to have the bride hold in her hand, but she had so much else in her hands that she looked as if she was goin' to drop it, and so he just took it and laid it down on the floor between 'em. Then in another thing he showed great taste as if he wanted to have things about right. He liked the effect of havin' it dark which would make it a much more magnificent affair than as if 't was light, as well as more solemn. So he had the rough board shutters closed and lit some taller candles. He hadn't no candle-sticks and he showed his common sense agin, in not bein' over nice on such a solemn occasion. He put one in a pewter mug, all polished up so it looked like silver, and one in a chany sacer that belonged to one of his grandmothers in England. Such associations made it pleasant you know. Them stood, the mug in front o' him, and the chany sacer in front o' her, so they could see they hadn't got hold of nobody else but

themselves. Then he stuck some up all round the room in the wreathes of sun-flowers. I was afraid they might burn down so as to set the sun-flowers a'fire, but then 'twas all over so quick after they got ready there wan't no danger. Now I've come to the most interestin' part, how they was dressed. She wore a green calabash on her head,"

"A what?"

"A green calabash. Don't you know what that is? A sort of winnerin' mill they used to wear on the head, with a bridle in front to hold it down, and big enough to put a cheese inside, on each side of the head. Then on that she had a blue gauze veil, and on one arm a work bag with knittin' work in it; and on the other a basket. I can't tell what kind of one it was, it wan't round nor square, but long with two covers to it like a half moon. In that was her head-dress, a funny sort of head gear it was too. It had a broad white linen frill on one side, and some pink gauze on the other, and right in the middle on top was the imitation of a sun-flower. I 'spose that was the reason she couldn't wear it with her calabash 'cause that set down kind o' flat on the top of her head. In one hand she had a yaller silk pocket handkerchief to correspond with the sun-flower, and in the other which had on a gentleman's black kid glove, she held a smellin' bottle. That's where they showed their good sense agin, 'cause if any body ever wants smellin' bottles, then's the time. Then she had on pink silk stockin's and cowhide shoes, and he had on white slippers and blue cotton stockin's.

"Oh dear ! don't give any more of your shocking descriptions."

"Why that was sensible, and Sykes was one that never would let his taste outrun his good sense. She might have damped her feet and took cold, women are so kind o' tender you know, excep' when they have a shiftless husband to take care of. Next come the ceremony which was very imposing. It was altogether the most magnificent affair you ever witnessed.

"When the Squire that was to marry 'em asked him if he would promise to love and take good care of her and so on, just as if his sayin' so would make any difference, he pulled back her calabash and gin her such a smack you could 'a heard it half a mile, and says he, 'That's what I reckon I will.' "

"What did she say ? did she promise to obey ? "

"Oh she was all kind 'o took aback, and then was the time she used the smellin' bottle. Well, the Squire waited until she recovered her senses agin, so she would fully understand what he was sayin' to her, and then proceeded in a solemn voice to tell her how she must honor and obey him in all things whether sick or well, drunk or sober, and then the poor thing went clean off. Howbeit, with the use of the smellin' bottle she come to agin, and the Squire he was very considerate, he didn't exact any promise of her and it was just as well as if he had, 'cause it's no matter how much a woman promises she always means to have her own way if she can get it."

"That's the end of the chapter is it, about long enough I think."

"That's the last I ever heard of 'em. I expect he's preached himself into paradise, and his wife into purgatory long 'fore this."

"Then he didn't think so much of her afterwards?"

"Of course he wouldn't, who does? There's somethin' kind o' strange about some o' them things. I never could understand it no how. You take a couple 'fore they's married, and how careful they'll be of each other, as if the very earth wa'n't good enough for 'em to walk on, and then 'fore the year's out half on 'em would git unmarried agin if they could."

"They should have a bottle of smelling salts by them all the time."

"Then another thing's mighty strange, when a body dies, how mighty good they is all at once. I never thought my old man was any better for bein' dead."

"Well, James and Mary are married, and I believe they will be happy."

## **CHAPTER XXIV.**

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"Go, feel what I have felt,  
Go, bear what I have borne—  
Sink 'neath the blows a father dealt,  
And the cold proud world's scorn—  
Thus struggle on from year to year,  
Thy sole relief, the scalding tear.

Go, weep as I have wept,  
O'er a loved father's fall,  
See every cherished promise swept,  
Youth's sweetness turned to gall,  
Hope's faded flower strewed all the way  
That led me up to woman's day."

To some it is given to reach the haven of domestic peace and happiness through troubled seas and stormy winds,—to others, is appointed a stern life-work as rich in experience, as susceptible of infinite joys, as keenly alive to the sorrows of the human family, as if they had tasted all the varied emotions of bliss and pain that lie within the charmed circle of home.

To this latter class Amelia was assigned. Nothing had occurred to enliven her lot,—nothing save the constant communings of her spirit with that invisible Presence which was drawing her more and more under the shadow of its own protecting love, silently moulding her for her future destiny.

She had been an uninterested observer of the events here recorded,—uninterested because they were but atoms in the great world of joy and sorrow

which was opening, like a prismatic view in every shade of coloring, before her awakening faculties and higher consciousness of a duty to be performed.

Was that duty to devolve on her,—insignificant, uneducated as she was? without a friend to sustain her, or one even to whom she might confide the noble impulses of her soul, and, in return, receive sympathizing counsel?

The past, with its sufferings, rose up to urge her on; the present, with its oppressive inaction, was unendurable; and the future presented no attraction, save as it should reap through her some inestimable benefit to the world.

She saw all around her evidences of the desolating scourge that had robbed her of her childhood, blighted the fair promises of early womanhood; laid her parents in dishonored graves, and now hung like a pall over the budding hopes of every hearth-stone in the land. Was there not work here?

But what could she expect to do when the mighty ones of the earth were silent? True, there was sometimes an effort made, rarely a successful one, to save an individual, while tens of thousands were every day rushing into the whirling vortex. The church occasionally breathed its anathemas against excessive drinking, which availed little, since it would have toppled to the ground if its denunciations had fallen on the heads of those who had grown to be its chief pillars and support through the ill-gotten gains they had derived from holding out temptations to that very class whose wickedness was condemned. Surely, a fearful responsibility rested somewhere,—a

stern necessity was laid on some one to cry out against the wickedness. If the strong ones were silent it might be because their experience had not been like her own.

Had not the weak things of this world been chosen to confound the strong? Was not He who had commissioned her for this work able to guide and sustain her through it? But then, perhaps he had not chosen her, and she was only the victim of her own delusions, the self-sent messenger on an errand dictated by the morbid sympathies flowing from her own sufferings. She would banish them forever from her mind, rise in the morning with a firm determination to harbor no more such irrational conclusions, and resume her daily task contented and cheerful.

The next morning was sure to bring a stronger conviction of her own duty, a greater restlessness under the self-imposed restrictions of it, and she submitted to what seemed to be the only alternative to decide the point. She must make the attempt, and the result would very soon show under whose leadership she acted; the mortification of a failure being no harder to be borne than present upbraidings of conscience, arising from resistance to this conviction.

Her resolution once formed she must confide it to some friend who would be willing to assist her, and she selected James Morgan. He did not give her the desired encouragement, but she was not disheartened. The idea struck him as a novel one, and coming from such a source he had serious doubts of its results in aid of the cause. Her design was to

give a public lecture in the village where he resided, choosing that place instead of her own city, as it would relieve her of many of the embarrassments that would attend her where better known. It was almost an unheard of thing for a woman to speak in public at all, and that Amelia should propose such a thing seemed a most absurd delusion. Finding she was not to be dissuaded, he promised to consult his old friend, Mr. Brewster, who was an Orthodox deacon of high standing in the church, and also a selectman of great influence in the town. To his surprise he heartily approved of it and encouraged Amelia to go on, saying, "God only knows what great good may come of an insignificant beginning." Strangers are much more ready to trust a person in a new enterprise than well known friends, as it is not easy to get over early impressions, or forget known faults which seriously detract from admitted virtues.

Deacon Brewster, however, was no distrusting sort of man. He encouraged people by trusting them, not blindly, but with a great deal of discretion and sound judgment. Amelia's unyielding determination impressed him favorably, and he dared not, if he felt doubts, discourage the least attempt to stay the swelling tide of intemperance.

A firm adherent to the rituals of the church, he never considered his creed too sacred to be tested by deeds. No construction of Scripture texts ever deterred him from giving his heart and hand to every effort for the elevation of the human race.

If one quoted St. Paul against woman, he quoted Jesus against St. Paul. If he was cautioned against

the danger of innovations, he cited Christ, the prophets and apostles as the greatest innovators for the banishment of all existing wrongs wherever found. "Whatever thy heart and thy hand find to do, that shalt thou do," was his motto. If those who promised well for a time gave out, he was neither discouraged nor lost his faith in human nature. If he subscribed to the doctrine of total depravity, he could not obliterate the lurking consciousness somewhere that in every individual, however vicious and depraved, was a gleam of the divinity of manhood, which commended him to the everlasting mercy of an ever merciful God, to which he appealed in love and trust, not in fear and anger, and his labors were fruitful.

The arrangements were made for Amelia to speak in the school house, as she preferred that for her first attempt to the church, which he offered to obtain for her. He also kindly volunteered to preside, after assisting her in every other way. It was crowded and surrounded with eager listeners; some, out of curiosity, others, especially women, from their heartfelt sympathy and interest in the cause.

As she passed through the crowd with Mr. Brewster, many remarks, some not very flattering, reached her ears. There were groups collected in every corner discussing the subject, in one of which she distinguished two or three familiar voices inveighing against the propriety of women appearing in public, and predicting certain failure. One was the well known voice of Mr. Kingley, greatly excited.

"I should like to know what business it is of her'n,

and the long and short on't is that it ain't none of her business, and she shan't meddle with our'n, she shall be put down and I'll raise a row to stop her mouth the first word."

"Hush ! keep still, and let her make a fool of herself if she wants to, I'll risk all the damage she does to our business, the boys will hoot her out of town. Let her alone, and I'll warrant a brisker trade to-morrow than we've had yet. I wouldn't take no notice of such a little upstart."

"A pity we took notice enough on her to come and hear her I think," said a third, "but I kind o' wanted to see what Bill Crawford's darter expects she is goin' to do agin us all. Any body 'd 'spose she thought she'd got some mighty big blood in her veins, to think what's got to be endured can be cured."

Some little confusion ensued after the remarks of the last speaker who was about half deprived of his reason, and clearly not one of the "caste" who dealt out the poison. The equivocal sound of his last sentence gave great offence.

A fourth stepped in as a mediator. "Let her alone," said he, "and she will soon show herself out, for nobody will run after such'a whim but silly, weak-minded wives, disconsolate widows, and discontented old maids."

This was evidently thought a good hit from the coarse laugh that followed, and very creditable to the profound sense of the lawyer dandy who uttered it and afterwards marched into the school-house with a very comfortable appreciation of his own merits.

Amelia heard this conversation as they slowly advanced, halting every moment for the crowd to give way, who were apparently unconscious of her identity with the speaker they had turned out to hear. She looked very much like other people, and they expected to see—an elephant. There was no little dissatisfaction and disappointment among curiosity seekers when she took her seat.

Deacon Brewster rose and addressed them briefly. "My friends," said he, "I congratulate you upon the privilege that awaits you to-night in listening to one who has herself experienced the evils flowing from the curse of intemperance, which no pen is adequate to describe, and of which no lips can in any measure set before you the reality of its fearful ravages. Yet she has suffered no more than thousands of others, no more than some of you; but as none can suffer who have not in some form fallen victims to this terrible scourge. Look around you, ask for the greatest cause that has peopled your jails, your asylums, your almshouses, and your penitentiaries; the answer will come back in thunder tones—Intemperance!"

"Ask what has desolated so many homes, turned so many innocent children beggars into the street, plundered and dishonored so many defenceless women in the bloom of youth and beauty; we hear the dismal echo—Rum!"

"Seek the causes that most disgrace society anywhere and you will find them in the bloated forms and blighted manhood of those who have sacrificed talent, honor, and the noble aspirations God gave

them, in the maddening pleasures of the bowl. I welcome woman to this stand. She who has suffered most must be the one to exert the greatest influence in this holy cause.

“ When a man becomes so degraded as to accept the gutter for his lodging place, he is insensible to all the refinement of his nature, and does not realize his situation, while his wife is compelled to witness from day to day the gradual sinking of her brightest hopes and noblest conceptions of what constitutes a pure and honorable manhood, down, down below the lowest attributes of the brute creation. Oh, woman! what hast thou not suffered! Never until speech is given to the green sods of the valley, which have interposed their friendly hands to shield forevermore from mortal suffering the mouldering dust that has lain down in gladness to embrace the cold mother earth as its dearest protector, will be known what agonies have been thine! O! young maiden! now weaving beautiful visions of the future; young men! rejoicing in the strength of youth, with the future's unclouded prospects before you, would you know the direst foe you have to dread, the wariest serpent that will infuse into your brightest anticipations the bitterest, rankest gall and wormwood mortals can partake,—it is the intoxicating cup.”

As Amelia rose, a sinking sensation began to creep over her, when she cast her eye in one corner where Mr. Kingley sat crossed-legged, arms folded across his chest, head leaning one side, and his scornful eyes peering at her with a malignity that reminded her of one particular evening, when her mother,

goaded to desperation, implored him for her sake and for her child, if nothing more, to sell her husband no more drink. With brazen impudence he took hold of her roughly and pointed to the street, where she, not heeding where she went, fell down several stone steps, from the painful effects of which she never recovered. There was no more weakness, no more trembling, no more hesitation,—only the bitter memories of the past now filled her mind.

“Friends,” said she, “you may think an apology is due from me for presuming to address you, young and inexperienced as I am, unqualified as I feel myself to be for the position I now occupy,—but, my friends, there are sorrows before which weakness and inefficiency rise into strength and indomitable perseverance, circumstances under which timidity and doubt vanish before the sure and irresistible tread of that invincible courage born of suffering and despair.

“I am not here to tell you of single instances of cruelty and starvation, or midnight broils that have resulted in the prison or the gallows, all of which are as familiar to you as the stars that twinkle over our heads to-night.

“I am here to speak in the name of woman for all that she holds dear and sacred in the heaven of domestic life;—to plead for the rights of innocent childhood, which have been violated by those who, in assuming the highest responsibilities God has imposed, have turned traitors to the holiest instincts of their being, by consigning to a life of misery and degradation, those immortal germs which they had no right to accept from the Father’s hand, save to

train them in the paths of virtue, purity and love, that they may be shining stars in his diadem forever. Is not woman a responsible agent in society? Does it not devolve on her more than on man so to cultivate the faculties of the child, that they may expand into the full fruition of the glorious birthright which is the heritage of all mankind, and grow like unto Him, in whose image they were created, in goodness and perfection?

"Can she do this, while in the land preys a vampire sucking out the life-blood of all that is pure and noble, loving and generous in husband, father, and son; making them the dregs of society, burdens on its resources, and a miasma in its moral atmosphere, thus counteracting the refining influences she inspires, and the lessons she would daily instil into the minds of her children?

"Shall woman then be silent? Has she not responsibilities as a mother that rise above and beyond all momentary considerations, even above the narrow limits custom has assigned her, that should urge her to raise her voice against the mighty tide of sensualism and debauchery that meets her at the threshold of those high and momentous duties, which, if they prove not life's highest blessings, will be its greatest curse?

"Woman *has* a right to speak, because she is the greatest sufferer. When her husband and son are maddened by the excitement of strong drink, insensible to the wreck they have made of themselves, it is she who sits trembling and shuddering at home, starting at every sound, listening to every foot-fall

which, in the dread silence of the night, is the portentous omen for the coming morrow.

"What hope has she to cheer her? what sign of joy comes to penetrate the gloom closing thicker and darker around her little ones, for whom alas! she sees nothing but a future of degradation and shame.

"Oh, God! the sufferer's friend! Thou alone knowest the wringing anguish, the desolation of sorrow that has made its home in thousands of poor mother's hearts, to be revealed only in that judgment day when the tempter and his victim shall be summoned to the bar of eternal justice, supplicants for that mercy which, while extended to all, abates naught of the exact measurement of the relative claims of each, neither absolves any from the righteous law of retribution which visits them in due proportion to their guilt.

"The first and most important question for us to decide, is the person to whom attaches the greatest guilt. Where is the fountain-source of this long catalogue of woes? It is of little use to lop the branches while the root is left untouched. It is wrong, as well as useless, to condemn the drinker and spare the seller, if we wish to eradicate the evil. Eradicate it? You will doubtless say that is impossible, and perhaps it is, so long as avarice and selfishness rule the human heart. But we may place it under the ban of society, we may award to it the same condemnation as to other sins, and, like highway robbery, make it the exception,—not the rule. Is it not ten-fold worse?

"The highway robber only plunders the pocket;

the man who sells liquor sends both the body and soul of his victim into the hell-fire of the most loathsome corruption and deathless remorse. My friends, are there any among you who have felt the drunkard's remorse? Is it not the most perfect exemplification of the horrors of the burning pit it is possible to conceive?

"Stung with reproach at the thought of what he might have been, tortured by a raging thirst beyond human power to assuage, life presents a fearful precipice, whence, to look back is misery and woe; to look forward is the ghastly blight of immortal powers and aspirations destined for the development of god-like capacities, which, from their perversion, goad him with a double edge in those momentary gleams of reason and consciousness, when, in utter despair, he strives to drown them all by plunging into still greater excesses. Is his guilt to be compared with that of the other, who, in the full possession of his faculties, in the broad daylight of the wretchedness and wo his hand has wrought, still deals out the deadly poison to continue the work of desolation? Is he any more deserving of the penalty of the law for crime committed under the influence of strong drink, than he who lets him have it, knowing its pernicious effect?"

Fixing her eyes on Mr. Kingley, who sat with head bowed down, and his cap pulled over his face, as if to screen himself as much as possible from the gaze of the crowd, she continued, "If there are any within sound of my voice to-night who presume to set at defiance the laws of God, the welfare of society,

the sacred claims of the family, by sending this flaming scourge into thousands of households which would otherwise have been the abodes of happiness and plenty, I implore them as one who has suffered too much to cherish towards them one revengeful feeling, to take this question home to their own fire-sides, to put it to their own conscience, as men who must one day answer to the query, ‘Where is thy brother?’

“Is there not a spark of the smothered instinct of humanity left to tremble at the accusing voices that shall rise from heart-broken wives and mothers, starving babes, and the ghastly wrecks of what were once stamped with the nobility of manhood, radiant with health and buoyant with hope?

“As you hope for happiness hereafter, and pray to be forgiven, I beseech you in the name of all that is pure and holy, just and true; in the name of every man who values honor and virtue; in the name of every woman who values the sanctity of home as the essential requisite for the development of those qualities that constitute the ornament of society; in the name of every child whose claims upon parental love and care have been ruthlessly set at nought, I implore and beseech you to turn aside from your evil doings, and endeavor to atone in some measure for the past by good works in the future, striving to bind up the wounds you have inflicted, and heal the hearts you have broken.”

Her remarks were listened to throughout with deep attention,—not a murmur of disapprobation was heard, and young men who had gone there to

jeer and taunt, came away with reverence and plaudits for the youthful speaker, many of whom went up to sign the pledge Mr. Brewster had drawn up. When she closed there was manifested a deep sensation among the crowd, in the midst of which arose an old man apparently, with trembling limbs and the other accompaniments of an unsteady life, who spoke with a loud voice, saying,—

“I want to make a temperance speech!”

A general titter ran through the groups of boys collected here and there in every available space, which increased as he went forward to occupy the desk at Mr. Brewster’s solicitation.

“Young men,” said he, “look at me. You may laugh at me now, for if you set aside the pity I ought to inspire, I must indeed cut a ridiculous figure. I was once young like you, the pride of my mother, and the joy and support of my father, who, thank God, went to his home in heaven before he was aware of the curse I was to bring on his honored name. The world was just as full of attractions to me as it is to you, and I indulged in all the joyous anticipations of honor and fame common to every boy as he verges into manhood.

“Look at me now, you see what I am,—a looking glass for you all. You think me old, but I tell you if it had not been for rum I should still be in the full vigor of life, in the flush enjoyment of all my faculties. Do you think I meant to be what I am when I first touched the drunkard’s cup? Ah! I abhorred that word drunkard as much as you can. I don’t know but I should have knocked a man down if he

had told me I should ever be a drunkard. But you see what I am ; my tottering form, my bloated face, my tattered garments ; for I tell you what it is, young men, a drunkard will always be in rags,—it is not in the power of any woman to keep him tidy and clean.

“ I despise myself not only for what I am, but for what I have made others become, victims of the drunkard’s curse. What you have heard to-night is but a faint picture of all its miseries, and I tell you what it is, that the lake of eternal torments is the mildest picture that can be drawn of the tortures of remorse awaiting the drunkard’s reflecting moments.

“ And now I am going to sign the pledge, and leave my children the consolation that their father died a sober death as a slight amend for bequeathing them such a miserable legacy as my own debauched life. Young woman, go on ! and heaven will bless you. You are not the first woman who has been a blessing to me.”

He grasped the pen convulsively and wrote his name with a firm though trembling hand. A breathless silence pervaded the room, and all eyes were fixed on Henry Morgan, for such was his name, the father of James ; on Mr. Kingley, whose head was now bowed down upon his knees ; upon James and Mary who sat a few seats behind him, both of whom were deeply affected. The tempter and his victim were confronted, the scales were about to be adjusted in accordance with the sure and unerring justice of heaven.

It was the first time Mary had seen her father since

he refused to listen to her before her marriage. She was agitated with mingled emotions of pity, affection, and sympathy with all the sentiments that had been expressed.

Mr. Kingley never after flourished as before ! Never since he turned Mary from his door had he been regarded with the same respect, even by his companions, and that hardening of his heart put out the little ray of warmth she had excited in his rough and ungenial nature. He did not relinquish his business, but reverses swept over him, and he at last received a mortal injury in the attempt to put out of his house two intoxicated men who resisted him with a savage fury.

## **CHAPTER XXV.**

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**"The hours are viewless angels,  
That still go gliding by,  
And bear each minute's record up  
To Him who sits on high."**

The few weeks of Walter's vacation in the summer passed so quickly that Rosalind scarcely realized their flight until the time came for his departure. Every moment was so occupied, and events of such interest and importance transpired, that it left very little of the impression of a holiday recreation to any of the parties. When the excitement was over and the house settled into its usual quiet, the active, restless spirit of Rosalind was far from being contented and happy, even in anticipation of the pleasant prospects before her. Her visits to Mary Kingley were very frequent, and, excepting the time she spent with Ernest, they constituted the happiest part of her life through the ensuing autumn. The prominent part her brother had acted in effecting James Morgan's reformation, and the wide scope recently given to the genius of her own mind, were the kind of life she coveted, and having once tasted the enjoyment of it, nothing less could satisfy her. She was so original in character that it was impossible to fall into the common ways of the rest of the world and

take hold of an enterprise already started with any degree of enthusiasm.

When the news of Amelia's successful undertaking reached her she was more dissatisfied than ever. That she, a girl of no culture, no advantages, no friends, and apparently below the average of people in point of talent, should have so far outdone her, who had all these advantages, made her own life seem very insignificant. Neither was she lacking in experience, the deepest source of inspiration, for few of her age had passed through a sterner discipline. She felt no prompting to such a mission, but the boldness and independence of the step commanded her warmest admiration.

Amelia possessed an advantage in not having any position to sacrifice, but on the contrary, a reputation to gain in the course she was pursuing. If in the eyes of the world she was stepping out of her sphere, no one could deny an amount of energy and ability which surprised them all, and won a certain kind of respect. Being of too gentle a nature to exhibit those prominent traits of decision and self-will which are apt to be conspicuous in those who contend successfully with opposition, she could be accused of nothing unfeminine in manner or speech, and the deep religious feeling pervading all her actions only added to the prevailing sentiment of the higher religious nature attributed to woman. There was no longer a lack of animation, a new life coursed through her veins and radiated every feature. Friends gathered around her, not only from among those she had risen to save, but from all classes.

An incident soon occurred, however, which was sufficient to engage Rosalind's mind, and start a train of thought that was not likely soon to be exhausted.

A crime had been committed, and suspicion fastened upon a poor young girl, who led a wandering life and obtained a living, no one knew how. Valuable goods had been stolen, and her presence the same day at the store whence they were taken was considered sufficient proof to warrant her arrest. The missing articles were also found in the building whither she resorted, of which the other inmates declared themselves wholly ignorant, and she was silent, making no reply to any interrogatories addressed to her. Her stolid indifference surprised even the hardened officials who took her in custody, and yet there was something in her face in striking contrast with her apparent recklessness. An air of innocence breathed through her demeanor, wholly irreconcilable with the low companionship she seemed to have chosen ; but neither persuasion nor entreaty could draw from her a single word of her history. When asked if she had any friends who would interest themselves in her favor, she resolutely shook her head, and it was evident to all that she must suffer the full penalty of the law, so strongly conclusive of her guilt were all the circumstances against her, while no one appeared in her behalf.

Amelia had frequent interviews with her, and after repeated attempts succeeded in drawing her into conversation. She denied all participation in the theft, but confessed to a partial knowledge of it. By degrees Amelia drew from her a sketch of

her life, degraded enough, yet free from actual guilt or personal dishonor and extremely touching. Amelia related some of the leading incidents to Mr. Brewster and his wife, and also to James Morgan, all of whom felt a deep interest in the prisoner, and a strong desire that she should have able counsel. To this, however, she seemed perfectly indifferent, refusing to communicate to any one but Amelia.

The pen of an author may sketch in glowing pictures the story of some isolated sufferer, whether the creature of fact or fiction, which shall stir every generous emotion of the soul, while every day, had we but eyes to see, and hearts to feel, the same incidents are coming within the range of our observation, and we carelessly pass them by without a thought. The real poetry of the soul which it is the true function of the novelist to portray, fails to make itself felt in its daily contact with others, unless there is a corresponding delicacy of perception which is able to distinguish the lineaments of real suffering from the impositions so often practised in its name.

Fortunately it happened that Walter was at home at the time the trial was coming on, and having been acquainted with the facts, resolved to defend her himself. True to the choice of his boyhood, his mind was still fixed on the legal profession as the pursuit of his life, toward which he looked as the goal of a laudable ambition, where he would have ample opportunities to befriend the friendless, as well as to gratify his own ardent aspirations. This case enlisted all the benevolent impulses of his soul, and kindled anew the enthusiasm he had ever felt

in the study of that science reverently described as "Law, which has her seat in the bosom of God." Without solicitation, or even preparation, he took his seat in the court-room, and listened to all the evidence, carefully observing the prisoner who stood with downcast eyes, manifesting the same indifference, scarcely appearing to notice anything that was said or done, until Walter arose, when those who observed her, perceived a slight tremor, a flashing of the eye when he began, which gradually softened as he went on. He spoke strongly against the danger of accepting circumstantial evidence as the conclusive proof of her guilt, discussed the divine nature of law, and the solemn responsibilities resting on those who assume its official duties, to see to it that injustice is done to none, urging the oft-repeated truism that it is better for a dozen guilty to escape than that one innocent should suffer. He then alluded to the possible circumstances of her childhood, the friendlessness of her position, the helplessness of her situation, and drew a vivid picture of all the difficulties attending "a homeless, penniless female sent from door to door in destitution and misery until every spark of self-respect has fled, and she gladly accepts the meanest hovel proffered by the lowest and basest of humankind, if so she may shelter her head from the biting blast of the north wind, and the still more biting sarcasm which too often awaits her at the rich man's door. Is she to be indiscriminately condemned, because, perchance, the frowns of the respectable have compelled her to accept the charities of the vilest? At whose door lies

the greater guilt? At hers, or that of the millionaire who, while his hands horde the wealth fortune has lavished upon him, regardless of her appeal, lends his influence to keep her where she is by withholding the assistance and encouragement which might save her from such a life of degradation, and which it is his highest duty as a christian to render. Think of a young woman whose misfortune may be her greatest crime, dragged to these halls on the mere breath of suspicion, where no friendly woman's voice shall cheer her, no kindly face shall beam on her in sympathy with her woman's nature, and yet for all that it may be that she here meets with the greatest kindness her life has known,"—

A shriek from the prisoner here interrupted him, and her indifference now gave way to raving demonstrations. The proceedings were suspended, and she was remanded to her cell a maniac. The judge and jury were released from giving their decision, for a higher tribunal than theirs was to award the verdict. A physician was called in who expressed no hope of her recovery, and advised her removal to a more commodious apartment as soon as the paroxysm subsided; her strength being too far gone to sustain her much longer in that state of excitement. She was removed to an upper chamber of the prison, where, in a few days she became calm. Her first rational words were to ask for the counsel who had defended her.

Walter was sent for, and when he entered her room, she exclaimed,

"May God forgive me the wrong I have done you, and done myself!"

Walter extended his hand, and requested an explanation.

She was very weak, and the effort that exclamation cost her had nearly wasted the little strength she had. Desiring to be raised in the bed, she looked round the chamber, and fully conscious of what had taken place, and where she was, spoke in substance as follows:

"Here I am within the walls of a prison, awaiting the penalty of the law, instead of sharing its protection, if God should see fit to spare me; and yet I speak the truth when I say that never before since my mother left me, have I been so comfortably provided for, or kindly cared for. For four years your face has haunted me; yes, you have been the evil genius that has driven me to desperation. Nay, do not start, it was all my fault, I see now how wicked it was in me, but I did not know any better, and there was nobody to teach me."

She stopped, and closed her eyes as if to shut out some bitter memory, then rallied again and proceeded. Her voice was fainter now, and Walter would have had her rest, but he feared it was the last opportunity, and his curiosity was greatly excited to know what strange connection he had with her.

"My mother," said she, and she lowered her voice to a whisper, as if afraid even to speak it now, "was a slave. She ran away before I was born and came north, where she lived until I was ten years old.

She used to tell me about it, and try to assure herself that she was safe now and had nothing more to fear, but child as I was, I knew she was afraid of something, by the way she used to start when she heard an unusual noise, or when a stranger spoke to her. She would tell me sometimes that if ever anybody attempted to carry her off, never to tell that she was my mother, for then they would take me too, and that was what she ran away for so that I should not be a slave: I am quite white you see, she said. I had my father's complexion, who was her master, and therefore a white man. She would not let me call her mother, but mammy, as the most sure way to escape detection. I don't remember how she lived and got along with me, I only remember these things that I wish I could forget, for they have burned my very soul out of me. They came and took her one day when she was at work at a tavern, and I saw her go. She made no outcry. I have wondered so many times since why she did not, but perhaps it was for my sake, thinking if she went peaceably I should not be discovered. She gave me one agonizing look, and motioned me to be still. I suppose she thought it impossible for me to have so hard a fate here under any circumstances as I should meet there. Perhaps not, but this is a hard world. I only ask that I may die now, and I will trust the mercy of God."

She sunk back exhausted, but revived again in a few moments.

"After she was gone I was afraid of everybody, afraid they would carry me off too, and I wandered

about begging a subsistence, going every night to a place where my mother had made it her home ; but they soon got tired of me, and treated me harshly if I failed to bring them home something. After a while I found it was impossible to get enough to satisfy my own hunger ; and one dark, stormy night, when I was suffering intensely with cold and hunger, not daring to go home, as I called it, I thought I would try some of the rich folk's houses, and see if I could get something there. Seeing a bright light in a large house standing a little back from the street, I ventured to go there, and before I dared to knock, I peeped through the window ; and then a dog barked and frightened me, and I ran off. That night, and what I saw through the window, I never could forget, I suffered so much. I knew you the minute I looked towards you in the court-room, and the first thought was that you had come to seal my fate. You were a young boy then, but your face is not changed. You looked so happy as you sat at the table ; and right opposite was a girl with curly hair, who looked up as I turned away, and a cat lay there asleep. I thought of my own wretchedness, when a spirit of revenge and hatred took possession of me, that I, a child, should be doomed to such misery, while even the brutes of the rich man's family were cared for and fed. What had I done that no one should care for me ? When I went into the street again a watchman took me up and put me in a room somewhere where they kept me till morning, when, with a reprimand, I was permitted to go at large again. I grew heedless of my looks and ac-

tions, caring only to stay hunger and get a lodgings-place for the night anyhow, with anybody. But I never stole in my life, never did a real wicked thing though I have been the witness of a great many. Something had kept me from it, but then I have sinned in other ways. I have hated the whole world because I was so wretched, and chosen my associates from the vilest classes, because they have shown me hospitality that the respectable would have denied me,—but then such a hospitality! Oh, little do you know, young and unsuspecting as you are, what dens of sin and corruption those are driven to accept who feel that they are the outcasts of society, when a single friendly hand, interposed at the right time, might save them from destruction."

She ceased speaking, being too exhausted to say more, and Walter hastened home to acquaint his mother and Rosalind with this novel and affecting item of his experience. He would have considered the whole relation an effect of her mental aberration, but for the accuracy of the little incident connected with himself. Rosalind went alone to visit her the next day, to see if she would recognize her. She opened her eyes languidly without appearing to notice her at first, but in a few moments she spoke as if talking to herself, "Yes, that is she, the girl with curly hair, but she has grown older since then; now I wonder if the gray cat will come next to make out the picture that has haunted me so. If they should carry me to that big house to die, then it would be complete, but no, I am here a prisoner confronted with my fate, and looking back over the invisible

threads I have so unconsciously spun into it, I can see what a slender one has separated me from what I might have been. If they gather round me now in my misfortune after the squalid life I have led, what might they not have done when I was an innocent child ? Yes, I see it all now, it was wicked in me to put no more faith in human kind, to believe they all hated me, and then in turn to hate them with such bitter, cruel hatred. But I was not all to blame, how could I know any better ? Didn't I see my mother taken away, and why shouldn't I be afraid of everybody ? Yes, I see it all now, how her master came there and knew her, and when she went out to the pump he followed her and gagged her so she could not make any noise, told her she was his slave and threatened her if she gave any alarm, and so she went off. Oh God ! why should we live to suffer so much ? ”

She appeared to be slightly wandering in her manner, but her words were coherent, and impressed one with a strong degree of truthfulness, yet it seemed scarcely credible that such a deed could have been done without being known.

She started up suddenly, and spoke at the top of her voice,

“ Yes ! you will be brought to judgment ! for such deeds as these which you think will never be known, shall this nation yet be clothed in sackcloth and ashes ! Oh God ! receive my spirit, Thou who art the poor one's friend.”

She sunk back exhausted, panting for breath, and soon fell into a quiet slumber. As she lay there

passionless and still it was easy to trace the lineaments of a highly wrought organization ; too proud to stoop to things low and mean, too sensitive to brook the world's scorn. While desperation had driven her to the vagrant life she led, it was evident that the publicity of being arrested as a criminal was so much of a shock to her nervous system, in addition to the powerful reaction which took place when Walter appeared in her behalf, that her mind lost its balance ; the rigor of a prison life having rapidly undermined the health that had previously begun to fail.

At set of sun her spirit passed away. It is impossible to describe the sensations of Rosalind as she gazed on that motionless form, looking even beautiful in death. Now that all feeling of hatred had passed away, a heavenly serenity revealed a loveliness of feature hitherto unobserved amid the tumultus passions of her earthly life. That one so young, and so innocent, should have been shut out of the social and refining influences of society, whether the result of chance or that lack of sympathy which too often repels those who would otherwise be attracted within its pale, was a source of inexplicable mystery to the wonder-seeking spirit of Rosalind, which still preserved some of the unsatisfied character of her childhood in searching the cause of everything that happened. This was an instance where blame attached to no one, and it was impossible to arrest the chain of circumstances, beginning with the barking of a dog which had driven this friendless one to seek the companionship of the low-

est, until her reputation was so tainted as to result in the almost certain conviction of a crime. Hard it is to fathom that overruling Wisdom, which in all its workings, compels us to acknowledge a divine power, and yet, to our short-sightedness, often

—“hides itself so wondrously,  
As though there were no God,”

that we stagger blindly in our finite conceptions of that infinite plan, which, knowing the end from the beginning, assigns to every human agency, be it evil or good, its appointed sphere in the harmonious cycle of the universe, and always in such a way that the eye of faith cannot fail to discern how the evil is overruled by the good, which, in due time, if we possess our souls in patience, will be made manifest even to our finite conceptions.

“Ah, God is other than we think,  
His ways are far above,  
Far above reason’s hight, and reached  
Only by child-like love.”

## **CHAPTER XXVI.**

---

**"Anon through every pulse the music stole,  
And held sublime communion with the soul,  
Wrung from the coyest breast the imprisoned sigh,  
And kindled rapture in the coldest eye."**

Rosalind's mind was soon too deeply engrossed with her own personal affairs, to dwell much on the sad events recorded in the last chapter. After procuring a decent burial for the unfortunate girl, and transplanting a white rose-bush from their own garden, to designate the spot where the weary and homeless one had at last found a resting place, every thought was given to an approaching event of the most vital interest to herself. The day which had long been set apart as the celebration of their nuptials was near at hand, with its usual accompaniment of bustle and preparation. Notwithstanding she had often said, that there was no necessity of being so hurried at the last moment, if sufficient time were allowed, so much was crowded into the last few weeks, that she scarcely realized what was about to take place. As Mrs. Claremont's house was sufficiently large to accommodate them all, a few changes only being deemed necessary, they were saved the labored details of a fresh outfit at house-keeping. But then there were so many last calls to be made, so many little things to be attended to, which, in a sud-

den event of that kind, might just as well have been dispensed with, that it was almost by compulsion Ernest could gain her undivided attention, even for a single evening. Like a cat just ready to jump, unless there was something to consult him about, her hand was on the point of withdrawing from his the moment he took it, as something was sure to recur to her mind that must be done then, or it would be forgotten. Systematic in all her arrangements, her ruling desire that every trifling thing, unconnected with herself, should be properly attended to, sprung from a consciousness, which in her demonstrative nature could not fail of expression, that she had reached a dividing point in her life where the closing hours of the era just past would yield satisfaction in proportion to the duties fulfilled, though they might be nothing more than to gratify her love of order and completeness. Any one similarly constituted will understand this feeling from experience on other occasions than this. A journey yields much more pleasure upon the reflection that no duty has been neglected, and every thing has been left in its proper place at home, even at the expense of a hurried preparation. Rosalind was of such a positive nature that any omission, however slight, disturbed her peace of mind. Perhaps she had promised some poor, lone woman, to spend an hour in reading to her, or to repair some article of dress for which young eyes were needed, but not so much as the bloom of young hearts, which detained her when Ernest was waiting for her at home, whom she

held in reserve, intending to atone in the future for her seeming neglect of him then.

A poor widow, whose only daughter and only child had recently died, received her last share of attention, to whom it was a great consolation to be thought of at such a time, and Rosalind subjected herself to much inconvenience to gratify her.

The Saturday night before her bridal witnessed all her plans completed, and she seated herself by the side of Ernest, with an evident feeling of satisfaction which lent an additional charm to their last private social interview as lover and maiden. The excitement of the last few weeks had not worn off sufficiently to come to the sober second thought of their approaching marriage, which was not even alluded to. Ernest enjoyed her thoughtless girlishness of manner, which to a stranger contrasted strangely with the sedateness of the woman a moment's thoughtfulness was sufficient to transform her into. The next morning, at break of dawn, she was up and doing. An odd memento she had long since promised to her mother when laughingly reminded of her strong attachment to home, a picture, representing the bride's farewell, suddenly recurred to her memory, which she immediately secured from a mass of articles collected for Kate, and hastily adjusting it to a frame, hung it in her mother's room, where her eyes would be likely to fall upon it as soon as she awoke. The affectionate embrace of mother and daughter was very touching, but the anger of the bridegroom at this manifestation of feeling which he expected to monopolize was

shown by his irritable looks as his hand grasped the door with a half intention to leave her where she was.

Mrs. Claremont smiled as she met her daughter at breakfast, but her thoughts were turned into a channel too serious for much demonstration of levity. When she arose, she approached Rosalind, and throwing her arms around her, said,—“And is this the last Sabbath-morning on which I can call you exclusively my own?”

A sudden revulsion of feeling swept over Rosalind at these words, and it was difficult for her to restrain the fast coming tears. Thoughts of her father and the reflection that she was so soon to part with the freedom and independence of girlhood, tinged her anticipations with a sort of mournful pleasure. With a thoughtful and reverent air the remainder of the day was chiefly devoted to her mother whose side she scarcely left. At church the sound of the music thrilled her with unusual fervor as if it heralded the advent of a new life whose record would be pure or sullied as she cultivated in her own soul those graces which should make it worthy the love of him who had chosen her for his companion through the storm and sunshine of their earthly career, and most ardently she prayed for strength.

The wedding day at length arrived, the day which for its tender and sacred associations, was scarcely less of interest to Mrs. Claremont than to the prospective bride. It was a day of her own selection, the anniversary of her marriage twenty-two years

before, the memory of which brought no sadness, but a perpetual joy.

Sorrow had no power over a love and faith like hers ;—it was only the heavenly dew-drop to quicken their celestial growth. In witnessing her daughter's bridal, she lived over again her young days without a regret to dim their radiance. Her passion for orange-bloom was not abated, and as it had presided at her own marriage festival, she wished it also to grace Rosalind's. She had then three trees laden with blossoms whose perfume filled the rooms. Then her favorite arbutus was strewn in lavish profusion, and a few exotics, like stray visitors, were welcomed to add their rich and varied beauty to the festivities of the occasion.

Rosalind wore a charmed expression, one of unusual serenity. She had accomplished every thing she intended, and nothing was left for this day which could be done before. She indulged in all the poetry of soul such an hour is calculated to inspire, and when the time came for her to dress, went about it as calmly as if she were merely to spend an evening out. Ernest re-arranged the orange bloom in her hair according to his artistic taste, after which they were ready to descend to the parlor.

Kate, who with becoming deference had refrained from her sallies of wit during the day, could no longer control herself, after being permitted with Milly and Amelia the honor of assisting at the bridal decorations, and addressed him, saying,—“ If you do not look out she will take wings and fly to the seventh

heaven before you get her half way through the knot," glancing at the lace drapery which hung in rich profusion over the pearl colored silk that was Mrs. Claremont's choice for her daughter's wedding dress.

Upon reaching the stairs, a sound as of distant music fell upon their ears, which gradually approached nearer until they reached the parlor, when a choir of infant voices in an adjoining room sung a hymn appropriate to the occasion. It was well for Rosalind that she had attained so much composure that day, or she would have found the exercises too lengthy, notwithstanding all she had said about the hasty manner in which the marriage ceremony is apt to be consummated. When with solemn emphasis the minister addressed her with the query, "if she would promise to love, honor and obey," she gave not the slightest token of response. That investigating mind had unpremeditatedly started off on a train of thought suggested by the occasion and the words, which could not comprehend the connection of the phrase with their relations to each other. The hour was too sacred,—the lingering influence of the music too exalted to be desecrated by an assent to any unmeaning phrase or unhallowed requirement which would give the lie to the pledge of mutual love, reverence and equality each acknowledged as their bond of union.

When the services were concluded, a troop of six young girls, dressed in white with wreaths of the arbutus and orange bloom intertwined with sprigs of

myrtle upon their heads, entered and stood before them, singing,—

“Now we come to greet you.”

The whole was a surprise, arranged by Mrs. Claremont. Her own married life had been so singularly harmonious and happy, she could scarcely harbor a doubt that according to present indications her daughter's would be equally so. So insignificant in the presence of an overwhelming joy seems the remembrance of all our griefs, that the future only, with its blank pages of virgin whiteness opens before us, about which it seems almost a sacrilege to breathe the thought of coming sorrow. The sound of the infant voices died away, and soon after the vibrations of the piano, when an impressive silence followed as the most fitting response for feelings too deep for expression. It was broken by the officiating minister, now slightly silver-haired, who, when a young man, had joined the hands of Alfred Claremont and Marianne Beaufort.

“I cannot forbear,” he said, “giving utterance to my heartfelt joy, arising from emotions excited in an hour like this. I have often wished that music had been ordained a part of the marriage ritual. Nothing could be more appropriate to such an occasion,—nothing could shed a more hallowed influence over the trials and triumphs that lie hidden in the dim future.

“During my experience of the last quarter of a century I have seen much, very much to pain me. I have been called to administer consolation in desolate homes whence the angel of love and charity

seemed to have departed, when I have almost involuntary whispered to myself, ‘Surely there is not music enough in life.’ And again I have been the witness of joys that seemed all too holy to be of mortal birth, when I have felt that the melodious harmony of heaven was reflected on earth in strains of sweetest music.

“My young friends, standing at the threshold of that portion of existence which yields the holiest emotions as well as the keenest afflictions, permit me as one who has experienced both its purest joys and its sacred sorrows, to assure you that in the storm as in the sunshine, God’s love is over all, and you will find that not alone in the spring-time of love, when the sunny future opens in unclouded beauty before you, but in the waning summer and the chilling autumn, amid blossoming hopes and the blight of disappointments, the green tree of affection which you have planted in your hearts will put forth new verdure, and like the orange scent of these rooms, will make your souls redolent with heavenly perfume. Life is not all poetry, and in those stern prose moments which will come to you as they come to us all, may the music song of this hour, like the grand old anthem which was chanted at creation’s birth, float over you as a prophetic inspiration of the future haven which shall witness the consummation of more than wedded bliss.

“Pardon me for this trespass upon the evening’s festivities, and permit me to introduce you to these assembled guests as Mr. and Mrs. Livingston.”

There were not many dry eyes when he closed his

remarks, and one among those not the least affected was Mary Kingley, now Mrs. Morgan. Only through tears could her joy and swelling gratitude find relief as the trying scenes of her life passed in rapid review before her, and her soul responded to the sentiments of the speaker, though she had yet but sipped of the full contents of the cup, whose varied mixture could scarcely admit of greater contrast than she had already experienced.

This was the first time she had visited the city since she left it, which was in accordance with a promise Rosalind had exacted the day of her marriage. It was the source of great pleasure to her—to them both, for the four weeks they had spent together so happily had united them in bonds of the closest friendship. One thing alone detracted from its unalloyed enjoyment, which was her longing desire to visit her old home and see her mother. This could not be, since her father had abated none of his former harshness, and had absolutely forbidden her mother to see her on any condition whatever. Often in the silence of the night with none but God to witness, had she wrestled with this inward pain, and as resolutely shut it out when day brought its cares that none might know, especially James, the struggle it cost her.

Rosalind, who often visited and sympathized with her, knew more of it perhaps than any one else. In answer to a salutation with which she frequently greeted her, "As happy as ever?" she would say, "Oh yes! only one thing to mar my happiness," and then immediately turned the conversation.

Walter was at the height of enjoyment. His visit home and meeting so many old friends, combined with the occasion to render it more than usually interesting to him. Rosalind saw his eyes mischievously following her as if he had some fun in contemplation, and she studiously avoided him. He watched his opportunity before the guests dispersed when he saw her and Ernest together, to whisper to him that the ceremony was but half performed, and he had better see to it before it was too late that Rosalind should enter into her part of the contract. In vain she tried to check him by placing her hand over his mouth. "I think I can manage that part," replied Ernest.

The clergyman being near, caught enough of what was said, to assure him what was going on, and stepping up, said, "As the power is all on the gentleman's side, man and wife being both one, and that one the husband, it matters little what she assents to ; "but my young friend," said he, slyly addressing her, "if you should be heavily oppressed, remember you will find a friend in me, who can defend you upon the testimony of this evening."

## **CHAPTER XXVII.**

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“Our souls at least are free, and 'tis in vain  
We would against them make the flesh obey—  
The spirit in the end will have its way.”

How quickly glided by those long summer days, gone they scarcely knew whither, nor how they had been spent, yet not idly. It is not always a waste of time when the hands are unemployed. There are hours of physical repose when the soul acts most keenly, yes, demands it, in order to assert herself more strongly; not a languid inactivity, but a healthful abnegation of all labor for the time being. This is the charm of twilight. The outward eye and the inner sense hold sweet communion there, and no hour is so dear for social converse.

Then come the longer autumn evenings, and the hour of pleasant chat beside the cheerful winter fire before the usual avocations are resumed, all these being just as novel and susceptible of fresh enjoyment in every different situation of life, as if they had never come within the range of our experience before. So a newly wedded pair finds in every day's occurrence a fresh sensation of delight, so different from what they have ever known before, even as lovers, and on the real blending of their souls at that period depends much of their future happiness as

husband and wife. No two persons can know each other intimately in any relation of life until they have lived together long enough to discover the sharp angles and latent virtues which elude the observation of casual observers, no matter how often they meet, if they do not come in contact sufficiently to clash. It is only by a rough blow the steel emits its spark.

It was about six months after they were married that Mr. Livingston was invited to deliver an oration before a literary society in a neighboring city whither he was to be accompanied by two acquaintances who dined with him the same day. His wife was deeply interested in their conversation which turned mostly on literary and scientific subjects.

After dinner she left the three to themselves and withdrew to her chamber where she remained until the hour came for their departure, when Ernest repaired thither. He was surprised to find her sitting in an abstracted manner, looking thoughtfully out at the window, and scarcely observing his entrance.

"Why Rosa," said he, "how blue you look! One might take you for the heroine of a love-tale whose honey-moon is over, and she is wishing herself back to maidenhood again."

She answered his salutation by a vacant smile, still watching the horizon. He observed her with no little curiosity for a few moments, and then sitting down beside her, took one of her hands in his, and gazed inquiringly into her face. He had seen her in many different phases before, but none resembled this.

" I was thinking, said she, " why it is that women must be excluded from such honors and pursuits as you are going to share to-night. Why should not your enjoyment be increased by our presence, instead of being selfishly reserved to yourselves? Do you think affection can be weakened by exercising the intellect, or are your festivals of such a nature that you fear her moral character will suffer from contamination ?

" If God has given us intellectual faculties, why should we not use them as well as you? What would be said of a young man, who, when his education is considered completed, should content himself with the frivolities of fashionable life? He would be regarded as weak and effeminate, lacking those noble qualities of heart and soul that lead to an honorable ambition, both for his own development and the world's good.

" To stimulate a woman's affections, which is done by educating her into the belief that that is her only sphere, and provide her with no means of access to other channels to absorb her attention when the object of them is withdrawn, is to subject her to a stern ordeal of mental suffering. The mind must have food of some kind or it will become a prey to itself. We are reproached for being silly and weak-minded, because we spend so much time on dress, and study nothing but fashion, when, really, it is you who have forced us to this kind of life, by giving us no other means of relaxation and amusement. Even the woman, who is oppressed with the burden and care of a family through the day, would often find it a rest

and diversion to spend an evening in mental enjoyments, where she would derive profit as well as pleasure.

"Every organ is stamped with its own particular function, which another cannot usurp, and only as each is developed according to the law that governs it, can we expect pure rational enjoyment, or advance to perfection. Affection can no more take the place of intellect, than meat can take the place of drink. The two should be considered as compliments to each other, not substitutes for each other.

"Mark how different the conversation when addressed to a lady from that to a gentleman. Even your friends this morning never thought of directing a remark to me. All that a woman is expected to be interested in or capable of appreciating is the merit or success of the last opera,—the most appropriate dress to be worn to a party, or, if seriously inclined, the prospects of the last revival. When you come to those sublime truths that underlie and uphold all this material world of ours,—the knowledge of those laws that govern the planets in their spheres, which sound the depths of the ocean, and measure the distances of the fixed stars, you club yourselves together as if God had been as narrow-minded as yourselves, and only created light enough to illuminate one-half of the world, leaving the other half in total darkness."

Ernest was both amused and puzzled by this extempore speech, which he could easily see by its earnestness of tone, and the deep revealings of those eyes so intently fixed on his, into which had risen all

the passion of her soul, that it was neither the out-growth of a momentary impulse, nor one of those transient, effervescent passages of her life, with which she often regaled him. Taking out his watch, and seeing it was time for him to go, he rose, saying to her caressingly, "Rosalind, as you are yet young and have such a fondness for literary pursuits, why don't you devote to them a portion of your time? I have formed too high an estimate of you to suppose you ambitious of mere worldly fame, and perhaps the assistance and approval of your husband may atone for some of the honors and privileges you envy us, and I do not say, without just cause."

She replied by a grateful smile, and he left her immediately. He was very conservative in his tastes and habits, and it had never occurred to him, as it never has to many other men, that a woman could want anything more after her affections were satisfied. Nothing that came from his wife was ever deemed unworthy of consideration, and there was so much of truth embodied in her remarks that he could not have thrust them aside if he would. He felt that there was not quite so much honor as is boasted in being styled the "lords of creation," and when greeted with applause and complimented with toasts, the sound of that delicate but keen reproach stung his sensibilities, and he felt more as if he had done some mean and cowardly act that merited disgrace than one deserving praise. He coveted more the smiling approval of his wife than all these courtly honors.

Rosalind never intended the personal rebuke she

unwittingly administered. Not since her father's death had she taken any interest in her former studies, and her books still lay neglected on the shelves where they had been last deposited before he was taken sick. Since her acquaintance with Ernest her mind had been engrossed with other subjects, and it was not until that morning, in listening to the conversation on her favorite topics, that her old passion for them revived. All the latent energies of those years burst forth in a single flame, and with scorn and contempt she spurned the established usages that stood between her and the highest summit to which her capacities fitted her to ascend.

When Ernest was gone she reproached herself for the sarcastic manner in which she had spoken to him, as if she meant to censure him for the fault of society. Yet was he not one of that society which by its tacit consent perpetrated these unjust customs that debarred woman of rights and privileges coeval with nature, which, as they were God-given, no man had the authority to take away? Then acting upon his suggestion she set herself expeditiously to work to withdraw her books from their long hiding places. What a throng of associations they brought! Here were Latin exercises, there were diagrams, and carefully wrapped up so no dust or stain could reach them were some astronomical cuts, looking as neat and new as when her father brought them home. The afternoon glided imperceptibly away, and as her mother was absent, no one disturbed her in her disintegrations. The floor was literally covered with books, papers, and drawings. So engaged was she

that she scarcely realized the absence of Ernest, who surprised her late in the evening, lost in reverie over the mystic shades of the Past, which seemed as unreal as the joys of the Present, yet fascinating from their strange power of inspiring reverence for what has passed away. Before her on the table lay an open writing-book in which she had completed the translation of an English story into French, and written at the close, "*Voila la fin de cette histoire!*" and Puss has nodded her approval of every word of it." Beneath was written in her father's hand-writing, looking so familiar that it seemed to bring him before her as if it were but yesterday, "*Et tu l'a écrit a merveille, ma chere;* but think not that I shall accept the testimony of a stupid cat to decide its merits." How freshly it brought to mind the old gray cat whose presence was such a painful reminder of scenes that could never be recalled, but whose death had been mourned as if she were a thinking member of the household from her association with those scenes. She rested her face on her hands and gave herself up to reflection, in which position Ernest surprised her. She looked up with an exclamation of joy as he removed her hands. "What!" said she, "home so soon?" to which he replied laughing, "The time cannot have seemed very long if you call *this* soon, nearly midnight."

"It has been a very busy day with me and a pleasant one too, I confess, though mingled with much that is sad; and I was so still in my closet looking over some books in a trunk that Kate did not hear me, and thought I was out when Mrs. Lane

called, so I did not see her. But then it was not much matter. Probably she would have talked mostly about the great party that is to come off Thursday evening. To tell the truth, if it were not for the looks of the thing, I should rather stay at home,—what does it amount to? So much labor and trouble just for a few minutes of enjoyment if we are so fortunate, which is too often paid for by a sick headache next morning."

"Really, you have taken a very practical turn to-night. Then you do not like these social entertainments? You, ladies are not so happy there as you profess to be?"

"Now Ernest, you know as well as I do that the greatest motive a lady has for going is to show off and be admired. If fortunate enough to succeed in that she is happy for the time being I suppose; if not, look out for a nervous headache. And you gentlemen, laugh in your sleeves to think we are such dunces as to have our heads turned with a little flattery. But how shall we amuse ourselves? It is not expected we shall take part in any sensible conversation."

"You will have a motive for going to Mrs. Lane's, for Professor M., the great astronomer, is to be there, and you will enjoy his conversation."

"A precious little of it I fear I shall have the privilege of enjoying, for he will collect around him a company of gentlemen; and if by chance a lady gets into the circle, he would perhaps remark that it is a very pleasant evening, in the midst of a rain storm. I don't wonder that it is so. It would be

disagreeable on both sides to talk upon subjects which one party is not familiar with, and a man coming down from lofty themes to some trifling affair might be so embarrassed as to make a ludicrous blunder. We ought to be able to entertain him."

"Perhaps it will be a rest, a diversion, to leave those lofty themes for a while and indulge in a little chat on common place affairs."

"Oh yes! now you've said it. When you are tired and want a little diversion, woman serves a very good purpose for you to amuse yourselves with, and possibly if you should have the sick headache or find a rent in your coats, she might be very useful; but whoever dreamed of any benefit to the literary or scientific world through her? It is not expected, and therefore she must take her rank as the appendage or ornament of social circles whose highest sphere is to give the prevailing *ton* to all fashionable society."

"I have no objection to the presence of woman anywhere I go. On the contrary I should enjoy it, but I think in general, they are better content to stay away. How many ladies of your acquaintance would not shrink from conducting the conversation with Professor M., if the opportunity were tendered them?"

"Probably most of them would, because they are not educated or qualified for it, and are too much the slaves of custom to step out of the path you have assigned to them. But if he is there I shall avail myself of as much of his conversation as I can, regardless of etiquette. Perhaps you will regret then

that I had not promised to obey, but it is too late now, and you will have to make the best of it."

"I will introduce you to him, and tell him I have the misfortune to be joined to a very refractory little wife who will have her own way, even to talking upon the science of Astronomy." So with a merry laugh and pulling his curls which was returned by pinching her ear the subject was dropped.

The morning was far advanced ere Rosalind could slumber. The thought of resuming her old pursuits through the enchanting mazes of science, and a rapid survey of the intervening years since she dropped them, with the varied scenes of pain and pleasure they had brought, so filled her mind as to chase the sleep from her pillow. At break of day she fell into an unquiet slumber when she returned in dreams to the happy hours of her childhood and was again a little girl sitting on her father's knee, or coasting down hill with him for a companion. Then came confused images of fireside pleasures, playing with wax dolls, imaginary tea-parties, and calculating eclipses; and lastly, she saw her father an angel seraph beckoning to her to follow him. She essayed to rise but was held back by an invisible power. She opened her eyes and saw Ernest standing over her. He had risen early and taken his accustomed walk, returning to the chamber just in season to see the smile that flitted across her features, and the partial raising of the hand.

"Oh Ernest," said she, "I have had such a beautiful dream!"

Its influence followed her all day, imparting one

of those trance-like states common to her, when every trace of earthly passion vanished and her countenance was so radiant and serene with an inspiration, not of this world, that she reminded one of some saintly picture, rather than the impulsive girl of yesterday.

She met with the desired interview on the evening of the party. Standing among the "Literati" who gathered around the Professor as the honored guest of the evening, she sustained her part in conversation with an ability equal to any one of them; and even Ernest was surprised at the extent of her knowledge. Never was he more proud of her than at that moment. All the genius of her soul was kindled which glowed with a wealth and splendor far surpassing the rich profusion of satins and laces that graced the outward form.

## **CHAPTER XXVIII.**

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"Holy and fervent love! had earth but rest  
For thee and thine, this world were all too fair!  
How could we thence be weaned to die without despair?"

Rosalind found much time to devote to her studies during the winter, in which, being occasionally assisted by her husband, she found a charm that dispelled many of those vain queries she was so prone to enter into. That intellect was finding rest at last, for it was a rest to be satiated in its demands, no matter how much labor it cost the brain to follow that untiring will. Domestic duties might press upon her, or benevolent enterprises require her assistance, but nothing could usurp the paramount claims of her nature upon that science which, more than aught else, revealed the mystery of the world's creation, and reconciled her to the decree which has appointed unto all men to suffer, since into all is breathed a spark of the divine life whose omnipotent genius called all these worlds into existence, and which will still exist when they shall cease to be. The sufferings of a few short years were swallowed up in the presence of the glorious eternity toward which all were hastening, and which was already beginning to dawn upon her as she threaded the sublime wonders so closely connecting the divine law

with the intellect of man. Others might reverently approach the Throne of Infinite Wisdom with so much of the child-like simplicity of faith in their organization as to abandon all doubts and questionings, but not so this investigating mind. She was subject to natural laws governing her organization, by obedience to which she could alone intelligently worship at the Throne of infinite love and knowledge. So long as she felt blindly led, stumbling blocks were sure to hedge her pathway, but when intellect, the channel through which all her convictions must receive their moulding process, was allowed its normal sway, her trust and faith were as clear and firm as Walter's.

During Walter's next visit home in the summer vacation, James Morgan and his wife paid a visit to Orange Grove, with their little son, a sprightly babe of six months. Mary had a great desire for her parents to see the little fellow, thinking it possible her father might relent at the sight of the priceless treasure, possessing such uncommon merit in her eyes. As it would not do for her to go there, it was decided that Walter and Rosalind should take him to Mr. Kingley's, thus affording his wife an opportunity to see him, whether he consented to it or not. They did so, and she was overjoyed, laughing and crying alternately as she fondled and kissed the babe again and again, while the little cherub kicked and crowed as if the whole world was bound to make him happy. Mr. Kingley received them coldly, taking no notice of the baby. He peeped suspiciously at them from under his shaggy eyebrows, showing

plainly by his actions that he considered them as intruders.

As they rose to leave Mrs. Kingley clung to the child with affectionate tenacity, when he spoke for the first time, addressing her,

"Don't woman, act so like a fool, let the young un go to his mother."

Although Mary had not expected her father to treat her with his former indulgence, she did think he would show some signs of lingering affection, and not until they returned and gave an account of their reception, did she realize how much she had calculated on this unconscious mediator as the repairer of the breach between them. She now gave up every hope of reconciliation, and when Rosalind restored to her her little charge, who immediately began to set up a clamor for his rights, the sight of his mother having suddenly reminded him of his morning lunch, she withdrew to her chamber, and after lulling him to sleep, gave way to a passionate flood of tears. She felt a sense of languor when her grief had spent its force, and, lying down by the side of her sleeping babe, a deep slumber soon came to her relief, which Rosalind thought best not to disturb when she entered the chamber to summon her to dinner. Finding the child awake, who was laughing and cooing gently, but not sufficiently loud to awaken the sleeper, she took him to the table where they had a merry time, showing the type of royalty to which homage is most readily given. The etiquette of the dinner table was dispensed with in the presence of the unconscious stranger who was making his first debut

at this family board. Rosalind tried to learn him to eat, and put some food in his mouth, for which, evidently, he had no appetite, or he was so excited by his novel position, that he could not give his attention to that duty. Finding himself the centre of attraction, as he looked from one to another of the group, he gave occasionally a leap and a bound, which excited their laughter, and in which he joined as heartily as any.

Mary awoke soon after, feeling greatly composed by the tranquilizing influences of sleep; and interrupted their merriment by her appearance, at which he recovered his appetite, and the customary honors of the table were soon resumed. James came the next day to take them home again, having left them the first time he was there at the urgent solicitation of Rosalind, which, however, he regretted before reaching his house. Desolate enough it seemed without the two lights that had of late radiated it, and he found food for reflection, at the thought of what was, and what might have been. Scarcey could that manly frame resist the gathering tears, as his soul ascended in praises and thanksgiving for the narrow escape from a life of degradation a kind Providence had vouchsafed to him.

Honors and fame awaited him, but nothing could win him from the side of his beloved Mary, where every evening was spent which could be spared from the pressure of business, being now admitted as a partner in the firm to which Walter first introduced him on that memorable day when he vowed before God never again to touch the intoxicating cup.

## **CHAPTER XXIX.**

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**“Every inmost aspiration is God’s angel undefiled,  
And in every ‘O my Father!’ slumbers deep a  
‘HERE, MY CHILD!’”**

The novel was quite neglected of late, yet not abandoned. Kate had contributed nothing towards it since the “magnificent affair of Syke’s wedding,” being now very much occupied during her leisure moments with a newly married couple, both of whom were ignorant of the first duties of house-keeping. Though an inexcusable fault in her eyes, “not knowin’,” she said, “what any woman could be thinkin’ of to bring up a girl in that way,” her usual kindness of heart prompted her to render them every assistance in her power. She had once lived in the family of the bride’s mother, and thus was on familiar terms, indulging in as much raillery as she pleased without giving offence, which was just what suited her. If she thought it showed a lack of common sense to put beans in the oven to bake without boiling, or to pour hot water on glass ware, she did not hesitate to say so, to which her pupil always assented. She could not afford to do otherwise, for Kate’s assistance was of great service to her, being at some distance from her mother, and finding her domestic duties of a much more complicated nature than she anticipated, so as to be occasionally discouraged.

"I found her cryin' to-night," said Kate to Milly, as she came home one evening, "and 't wan't nothin' neither. I should have cheered her up pretty quick but there was an old croaker there, I don't know who she was, that was as mournful as Job's widder. She sat there with her hands clinched, the corners of her mouth hangin' down, and her eyes lookin' straight into the fire as if all the light there was in 'em would have to come from there. She fetched a long sigh, and says she, "That's the way when folks get married ; gals never know when they're well off. This world 's full o' trouble."

"If this world 's full o' trouble," says I, "then it don't make no difference whether we are married or single, we've got to have it any way."

"She fetched another sigh, changed her hands, puttin' the one that was underneath on top, pressed her lips a little closer together, then opened her mouth with a voice that sounded as if it had run away from the tombs, 'Young woman,' says she, 'it'll do for you to laugh now, but when you get to be as old as I am and see all your ancestors comin' up round you as thick as weeds in a garden, not mindin' their ways to walk as they'd ought to in the straight and narrer path I fetched my children up to walk in, may be you won't feel like laughin' then.'

"I chuckled away to myself, thankful enough to see her get up to go when she had said that, and she hadn't more'n got to the door when Jenny come and took hold of my arm, smilin' like a fresh peach, and says she, 'I am so glad to see you, for I wanted to make some hasty puddin' and I didn't know anything

how to go to work. I didn't know whether the water ought to be hot or cold, and so I've only got so far.' What do you think she'd done? She'd mixed some meal just about right for a johnny cake and was goin' to put it into the water and let it dissolve, when she found out whether it ought to be cold or hot. 'That wan't what you was cryin' for was it?' says I. 'No,' says she, 'not exactly. I was puzzlin' over it and thinkin' what a bad day I've had of it tryin' to bake, when that old woman come in and begun her mission as Job's comforter by sayin' that this was nothin' to what I should have to meet with yet, and almost made me think I never should see another minute's happiness in the world.' I laughed outright, and says I, 'I guess you won't if you are goin' to give up so.'"

Milly's mind had been wandering among other scenes than the vexations of young house-keepers, and Kate soon left her to her own meditations, not receiving any reply to her running remarks. She had watched the gorgeous sunset until its flaming tints of crimson and gold contrasting with the clear azure of the vault above had kindled in her soul that intense rapture which so abstracts it from the common affairs of this work-day life as to turn to them again with reluctance. Willingly would she have become a disembodied spirit, to soar away among those heavenly regions where the miseries of this world could no longer pain the ear, and she might realize the ideal, whose fair proportions then rose before her mind's eye, not to be revealed in human language. Like the first rude sketch of the artist,

her conceptions at that moment embraced the outlines of a millennial state, clearly comprehended by the inner sense, but not tangible to others.

Gradually as the shades of evening gathered around her, darker pictures of the poverty and wretchedness of life cast their shadows over these fair visions, and instead of wishing herself released from her earthly abode, she felt the sublimity of a life that demanded, not rest,—not absolution from the trials of this world, but a devotion to its highest interests here.

She thought of the thousands unto whom the light of day comes only as a dreaded tyrant, at whose approach the weary, worn out frame must bid adieu to its needed repose; of the multitude of children treading the paths of sin and vice, through want of a mother's tender care to guide them; of homes surrounded by every physical comfort, made miserable by the discord reigning within, and she thought of those also whose infatuation on some favorite theme of pecuniary gain or worldly fame blinded them to the richness and beauty of this outward life, thus voluntarily depriving themselves of those blessed influences which, in her poetic nature, were closely associated with all solid enjoyment and individual perfection.

Milly was never unhappy, neither was she one of those restless spirits, always discontented with their present position, but she was one who, approaching middle age, could not look back with satisfaction upon a life devoted to no other interest than the trivial occupation of the unmarried woman. Retro-

spection always affords little enough to satisfy us, even when engaged in the most philanthropic enterprise, for whatever we may have done, our ideal, the key-note of aspiration, is still unattained. One of the greatest blessings of any occupation, is the little leisure it gives for reflection and regret. Repentance is good, and when the mind stops there, leaving the past to bury its dead, great results follow. Regrets, whether with or without cause, should never be indulged in. The conscience becomes morbid, the intellect clouded, and the mind is unfitted for the satisfactory performance of any duty or participation in any enjoyment. To prevent this it must be supplied with other food to fill the vacuity, and employ it, something which shall create an interest aside from the mere occupation. The matron of a hospital, or the care-taker of a family of orphan children, finds a rational enjoyment the pleasures of home could not yield unless her presence were needed there for something more than her society. Let the construction of the text be what it may, concerning labor being ordained as a curse, it must be the conviction of every candid mind that it was ordained as a blessing from the beginning of the world,—not that labor which consigns thousands to a cheerless life in crowded attics or sunless basements every hour of the twenty-four, in order to ward off starvation from the door, but the healthful, stimulating exercise for both body and mind every individual craves as the requisite of a sound physical and mental bodily development.

Kate, in her rough, unpolished way, lived out this

theory. She had a more serious vein of humor than was indicated by her trifling manner of conversation.

Milly could detect in many a homely phrase and jesting remark, a depth of thought that suggested original ideas to her own reflections, and she never wearied of her, if she did sometimes leave her to pursue her theme of discussion alone. She admired her unceasing activity, if sometimes culminating, for the sake of diversion, in the nonsensical affair of "Syke's wedding," which might be of more value in enlivening some low-spirited invalid, than all her idle dreaming of a world renovated by a philosophy she could never expect to be put in practice. It was easy enough in the solitude of her chamber to dissect men's motives and analyze their main-springs of action, building up a logical basis of principles for the reconstruction of society which would ameliorate some of these social evils, but let her take her theory outside, and what was it? Most fitly expressed by Kate, a mere cobweb, the first contact with the world swept away. And thus she dreamed on, yet perhaps not idly. Every pure and elevating thought that comes into the mind is worthy of reception there, and should be welcomed as a heavenly guest leading us higher in aspiration until the subtle fetters that bind us to a selfish ambition and the love of worldly approbation melt away in the approving smile of Him who created us to be heirs to his glorious promises.

There are chimerical dreamers, mere visionary enthusiasts, both pure in motive and earnest in thought, whose labors are barren of practical results,

tending rather to confuse the intellect, than to enlighten the conscience, of whom we cannot say they have lived in vain. By their faults do they teach us, and by their wanderings amid arid sands and dreary icebergs do we learn to appreciate the infinite attributes of that Being whose compassionate love entitles him to the crowning glory which permits all his erring children to address him reverently as, Our Father!

Our Father! This is no idle sounding title. When the world misjudges us and friends grow cold ; when the burden of our sins oppresses us and no human eye deigns a glance of sympathy ; when prejudice hurls its stinging dart and no avenue of defence opens before us, the weary soul turns with yearning confidence to this sure and steadfast Friend who never casts it off, and unto whom no aspiration ascends unheeded.

## **CHAPTER XXX.**

---

“Home is the sphere of harmony and peace,  
The spot where angels find a resting place,  
When, bearing blessings, they descend to earth.”

Shall we describe the angel-child Lilly, whose symmetrical features and quiet ways were the exact counterpart of her father's, or shall we leave her to the creation of the fancy, after giving the brief outlines? Fair as a lily her straight soft brown hair was of the richest hue in which nature asserted her independence, as that of both her parents curled. Mrs. Claremont christened her the Mayflower. Kate declared her the “most perfect incantation of the saint she ever knew,” and Milly abandoned her old daily occupation of analysing men and things, to devote her attention exclusively to this new revelation of the divine genius. It had never been her fortune to live with a baby before, and her warm affections soon twined around her with all the strength of a nature which had expanded without any particular object of love. This sweet companionship with a child formed one of the most blessed experiences of her life. A priceless blessing to this sorrow-stricken world is ever the presence of childhood. When bowed with age, or rent with anguish, cheerily sounds the innocent little laugh coming from a soul bubbling over with its own merriment. And the bounding little foot-step and the roguish little hand, alike ruffling to the

temper and provocative of smiles, win us from the staid maxims of life to that primeval state when the impulses gush out in rude defiance of any established principle to guide them. And the vexatious cares that have burdened many a mother whose strength was not equal to the task, are suddenly transformed into coveted enjoyments that would bring joy and health to her again, when the little form is hidden from her eyes forever.

The crib, the "half-worn shoe," broken toys, and anon some lost trinket, accidentally discovered where it has been secreted by roguish hands, speak volumes that per<sup>c</sup> could never express, and form more sacred relics than were ever gathered by pilgrim bands.

Lilly was an active, playful child, but so still that she never disturbed any one. A frequent visitor at her father's studio, those little baby fingers amused themselves with drawing birds, kittens and flowers, when her lips could only lisp their names. Having a great passion for flowers her father appropriated a little spot of ground solely to her use where she was permitted to go at any time to pick them, and taught to understand that they were at her own disposal as her private property, which afforded unbounded delight. Nearly every visitor at the house was presented with a flower, sometimes with a bouquet. An aged man, who had apparently seen fourscore years, one day made his appearance at the gate when she was busily engaged with her watering pot. Her father pointed him out to her and, dropping the pot, she hastily gathered a pansy and a daisy to present to him. The old man was deeply moved by the

friendliness of the little gift, and turning to Mr. Livingston said, "If every body had been as considerate as that little child, I should not be where I am. When any body begins to go down, the world keeps pushing him down, not even deigning to give him so much as a daisy to cheer him."

"Oh the little darlin', what a blessed angel you are," said Kate, as she ran out and snatched her from her father's arms on their return from an evening ride, and sallying into the kitchen, kept up such a constant chatter and laugh, that when Milly took her to prepare for her night's rest, the child was so excited she did not go to sleep until midnight. Talking with her eyes more than with her lips, Kate liked to watch their sparkle when any thing pleased her. And then she had such cunning little hands, neither chubby nor lank, but just full enough to take off their bony look, which was her conception of a beautiful hand.

Walter came home that day, having completed his studies and prepared himself for the practice of his profession, intending to commence it in his own native city, and if successful, to establish himself there permanently.

A curious little adventure happened that afternoon as he and Mr. Livingston were out looking at a beautiful collection of plants, where they happened to meet an old classmate of the latter, whom he had not seen for many years.

Being a student of botanical science, and also somewhat eccentric, he asked Mr. Livingston if he had any rare specimens of plants to show him, in reply

to an invitation to call at his house. With a mischievous twinkle in his eyes which, however, was unperceived by his friend, he informed him that he had two very rare specimens of the rose and lily, he would be very happy to introduce to him. Impatient of delay, in the anticipation of such rich treasures, the bachelor friend could wait no longer, and called that evening, just after Lilly was taken up stairs to her mother. After the usual salutations, Ernest hastened after them, fearing it might be too late for Lilly to appear in her most interesting manner, as it was getting late and she might be sleepy. On the contrary, he thought she never looked so pretty before. The excitement had imparted a delicate flush to her cheeks, and her eyes, which resembled his in expression, were sparkling with happiness running over. Taking her in one arm and giving his wife the other, he took them to the parlor and after introducing them, said, "These are my Rose and Lilly, and in granting your desire to inform you where you may be able to obtain more of the same species, I have only to say that profiting by my experience, you must select your rose from the purest love, and you will never feel its thorn, and fairer than any hot-house plant will bloom the lily of your household." The bachelor friend was rather abashed, but enjoyed the joke. Whether this little incident awakened emotions that had long been slumbering, or Milly's pleasant face and unassuming ways alone attracted him, it was evident by his frequent calls before leaving the city and inquiries after her when not present, that he felt an unusual interest in

her. What might have been, but for Lilly whom no stranger could supplant in her affections, romance doth not say. She was too happy now to desire any change.

When Lilly was three years old her father painted her picture, which was a source of great delight to them both. She would steal softly into his room and look over his shoulder when busily engaged upon it, and without interrupting him by a single word stand perhaps half an hour, when, giving him a kiss and receiving one in return, she glided out as still as she glided in.

Halcyon days were those, fitting scenes for a noblest to dwell upon. In the reality of life there is so much of pain and sorrow to sicken the soul, one turns with irrepressible longing to a fairer world, where affection, divinely commissioned of heaven, has power to assuage many a sorrow and heal many a pain. Such homes do exist in real life, sufficient to show that we can form no ideal so high even in romance, as to be unattainable. The ideal is the divine part of our nature and it is in striving to make it real that progress is made.

The function of the novelist, however trifling or detrimental it may seem to the prosaic mind, is an important one. Through the fascinating power thus wielded over others a great influence may be exerted to elevate the moral tone of society by presenting pictures of domestic life that shall array the merits and demerits of virtues and vices, delineating those delicate threadings among the counter currents of passions and emotions that control the individual, which escape the observation in actual life.

## **CHAPTER XXXI.**

---

“Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.”

“Shall tongues be mute, when deeds are wrought,  
Which well might shame extremest hell?  
Shall freemen lock the indignant thought?  
Shall Pity’s bosom cease to swell?  
Shall Honor bleed?—Shall Truth succumb?  
Shall pen, and press, and soul be dumb?”

Before Walter commenced his professional career as a lawyer, he started on a journey that had been a subject of his thoughts for many years, intending to visit the tomb of Washington, the Capitol of his country, and other places of interest at the South. He was a very enthusiastic politician for one of such precise ideas of morality, much more so than Ernest who took very little interest in political affairs generally. They often discussed the leading topics of the day, upon which the latter kept himself well informed, but he did not care so much to enter into the arena of debate as Walter. He liked argument, liked to probe the depth of every measure to see if it rested on a sure foundation, and was unsparing in his criticisms if it did not. Party spirit then ran high, and a new element was just beginning to tinge the waters of civil commotion, which was soon to sink all other issues in its transcendent importance. Already Mammon began to tremble, and priestly ar-

rogance to hide itself behind the bulwarks of tradition and sophistry.

Although Walter had studied his political creed under the most conservative teachings, his religious convictions had not parted with that cardinal point which is the unquestioned heritage of the Protestant faith, the right of private judgment. It would have given him no pleasure, and it would have been no inducement to travel anywhere under a restriction of any opinion he might hold on any subject that came under his observation.

On reaching Washington, meeting an old acquaintance who was going directly to Mount Vernon, he accompanied him. He visited the tomb of the great Patriot and Defender of his country, and rambled over the grounds so often pressed by his weary feet. Descending a slope that led to the spring in a sequestered, but most enchanting and romantic spot, he sat down to rest and feast his soul upon a beauty of natural scenery that, aside from the interest it inspired by its association with the illustrious dead, was well calculated to lead the thoughts from the narrow range of the present over the boundless fields of the past, and the ungathered harvests yet to be garnered in the golden sheaves of the future. He dwelt upon the long list of British aggressions that had fired the indignant souls of Adams and Otis, until the flames of war kindled the whole Atlantic seaboard, when, by the united voices of those sitting at the helm, the rising ship of state was entrusted through its varying fortunes to the skill and wisdom of a young man whose successful career had laid the

foundation of a nation stretching its arms over the oppressed of all lands that they should find here an asylum and a home, unmolested in the enjoyment of freedom of conscience, and he grew impatient of himself and longed to be another Washington. Full of these reflections he left this favorite Mecca of the Americans, undisturbed in his delightful reverie until he reached his hotel in Washington. There he overheard two gentlemen discussing a slave auction that was to take place the next day, one of whom was lately from the North and apparently a novice in such matters, to whom the other was giving instructions how to proceed to secure a good bargain in the pound of human flesh. His revolting details of personal examinations, and the heartlessness with which he described the shrewdness necessary to elude the deceptions of the slave-trader on the one hand, and the pretended sensibilities of his victims on the other, clashed greatly with Walter's ideas of the sacredness of humanity.

The next day he attended the sale, which was not calculated to allay his excited feelings. He saw there beauty, that the aristocratic circles of his native city might envy ; children whose saddened countenances indicated the weight of years rather than the buoyancy of childhood ; aged men and women, whose bowed heads betokened the utter despair of their hearts. Around them was a motley crew, mostly vulgar and brutal ; yet occasionally, one of gentlemanly bearing stood a little apart like himself, as if ashamed and disgusted at this nefarious exhibition of depraved passions and filthy lucre. Foremost

among the latter class was the prospective Northern slaveholder, shrinking a little from the unwelcome task before him,—unwelcome, because the Northern prejudices against the system instilled into him among the granite hills of his native state were not quite conquered, yet bearing on his brow the well defined outlines of a dogged perseverance when the Yankee's love of money should overpower the nobler instincts of the soul. He bid off at an exorbitant price a beautiful Quadroon, not the best investment of money, which was of little moment just now, as he had fixed upon her, at any price, for a present to his young bride; but retribution soon followed them both, for the Quadroon became the fire-brand of domestic discord. The sale went on very much like our sales of cattle and swine, with the exception of a more barbarous set of tradesmen.

When Walter returned to his hotel he made some remarks upon the revolting spectacle he had witnessed, and drew some disparaging comparisons of this inhuman traffic with the theory of our democratic institutions and religious professions, which stirred the chivalric blood of the hot-headed Southron.

“ You'd better look out, young man, how you come here to meddle with our institutions. They are our right, and we will have none of your Northern interference,” said a well-dressed sprig of the Southern aristocracy.

“ I did not come here to meddle with your institutions. I came to visit the tomb of Washington, the founder of this Republic, and I ought to have the right of free speech any where within its precincts,

upon any subject, or it would not be deserving the name of a Republic," quietly, but firmly responded Walter, eyeing his opponent.

"I challenge you," said the latter, doubling his fists, and assuming a defiant attitude, "in the name and honor of our darling institution that you have insulted."

"I fight no duels," calmly replied Walter, "the cause that descends to such low means for its defence shews the most convincing proof of its own weakness."

A tumultuous roar of voices now succeeded. The slave traders who had resorted thither after the auction, inflamed with whiskey, made use of the most obscene language that ever greeted his ears, independent of the epithets applied to himself.

"Set him on a rail and give him a right smart treat of our hospitality," drawled out a thick set, low-browed, savage looking, tobacco chewing representative of the "sacred" soil of Virginia, who, no doubt, would faithfully execute any deed of that nature imposed upon him.

"He prates about Washington as if that was any thing to us. He was an old fool that he didn't get his old woman from your cussed North, instead of humoring their spleen. That's where he missed it, and made us a heap o' trouble, that he didn't make them understand in the beginning what's what. Made 'em know that they'd got to obey the laws, and stop this old confounded prattle about human rights and the nigger, but we shall have 'em yet tighter 'n

a vice, then we'll see 'em squirm. Our plans are all fixed."

This defiant speech of one of the cotton lords was followed by a roar of exultant laughter, and a knowing shake of the head of one of the lower class as he called out to a craven looking huckster standing in the door,

" You worked the card slick James when you got your niggar wench from the North, and there wan't no outcry about it nuther that ever I heered on, shows how much they care for the nigger arter all. That was right hard on you when she run away, bein' the only one you ever owned, you might a' raised a right smart stock from her, and she never was wuth nothin' to ye arterwards."

Walter was on the point of asking a question or two here, but the landlord managed to draw him one side and besought him to leave as soon as he could or they would both get into trouble. He had been witness of too many such altercations to be unmindful of their results. Walter had no desire to stop longer among such society and he hastened away disgusted and disheartened by what he had seen and heard in the heart of the nation. It so happened that before he left the precincts of slave-dom, he was the witness of another auction. This was a more private sale, being the bankrupt stock of an individual lately deceased. He was an unusually indulgent master, and the grief and lamentation of the slaves as they were put up was heart-rending. Here was a favorite slave woman, nearly white, who was born

and reared in the family, and had never known a single hardship. Her mistress was a very inefficient woman, free from the jealousy commonly excited among Southern ladies by the presence of slaves superior to themselves in personal attractions or mental capacities. The consequence was, this woman exercised far more sway than she did herself, and was naturally proud spirited and sensitive. The defiant look she cast when ordered to take the stand roused the passions of a Southern slave-dealer who had often seen her and tried to obtain her of her master, and he determined now to have her in his power to conquer. He subjected her to every species of insult in his questions and examinations, while she trembled from head to foot through fear of falling into his hands. The price ran high, being a desirable article, so to speak of a human being, and he had to pay an enormous sum. When he laid hold of her to take her away the resistance she made ruptured a blood vessel and she bled to death on the spot. The wrath of the slave trader knew no bounds when thus foiled of his prey, and he swore and kicked her, while the bystanders exulted in his loss, some of whom were sadly disappointed at not being able to obtain her for themselves. The little notice taken of this event, merely as if she had been a dog or a horse, was an outrage to civilization Walter would not have believed could exist in his own country if he had not been an eye witness of the fact. His enthusiasm received such a check that he had no desire to continue his journey farther, even if allowed the free expression of his opinion. True, he knew slavery

existed in the land, but it never came home to his conscience in this light before. Like thousands of others he accepted the current phrase that this was the freest country on the face of the globe, the truth of which, tested by Massachusetts institutions, there seemed no reason to question. He returned to his Northern home, but it no longer wafted o'er his brow the free, pure air that inspired his childhood's boyish dreams. A deadly taint rested on all the superstructure to which he had formerly turned with reverence as the embodiment of human wisdom, extending its privileges for the benefit and protection of every child of the human family ; and he saw Law, which was associated in his mind with the first principle of divine order, perverted to the vilest of purposes, while no one questioned the rightfulness of the foul work to which it was prostituted. He went into a searching examination of all the various channels of jurisprudence to which his native tongue gave access, and sought in vain for a vestige of the shadow of right to barter as merchandise a human being under any pretext whatever. Even Blackstone, the child and advocate of a monarchy, gave to Liberty the broadest interpretation that could be safely done in accordance with the reserved rights of the individual, and in no case were the latter to be given up except for the benefit of society, in which he would share as one of its members. Again and again did he reperuse those pages to trace there the principle that governs all history, and under the guidance of a new light, which the Law school of Cambridge could never yield, he gradually unfolded the divine plan by which,

through storm and revolution, the passions of the multitude and the unflinching fidelity of the few combine, from the irresistible necessities of the hour, each acting in its own characteristic channel, one through fire and blood the other through the preaching of truth alone, to baptize anew the idea incarnated at creation's birth, when man was created in the image of God, that as such he should enjoy all the prerogatives, immunities and heirships to which he is entitled as an immortal being, irrespective of clime, color or condition. His resolution was formed. He would exert his own influence to rouse the slumbering conscience of the North to a sense of its participation in the common guilt by maintaining silence when such enormities were perpetrated in the heart of the nation. Especially was it incumbent on the church, whose mission it was to preach the gospel to every creature, to remember the oppressed as bound with them and to warn the oppressor of the day of judgment, when if he did not heed the divine command to break every yoke, he would be visited with fire and sword, with pestilence and famine, to take up this question and present its claims to the religious world.

## **CHAPTER XXXII.**

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“Walk  
Boldly and wisely in the light thou hast,  
There is a hand above will lead thee on.”

Walter was disappointed in the sympathy and encouragement he expected to meet with in the social and religious world. Friends stood aloof, and the church looked with suspicion upon any innovation calculated to raise excitement. Previous to this time “order reigned in Warsaw.” Theological discussion was lulled, and if the same animosity existed between the sects, it was considered the wiser course to let each pursue its own path, trusting to the mercy of God for its conversion, rather than protract such useless controversies.

The excitement upon the slavery question which followed the revolutionary war had also subsided, and Southern markets plied their busy trade without hindrance from any source. Northern avarice and Southern cupidity joined hands in unholy wedlock, while the priest and Levite stood by to bless the banns.

The graven image was set up, the altar unto Molock was consummated, and it was only the struggling of the victims which began to disturb the conscience of a disreputable few who dared to confront the selfishness and prejudices of the community in

defence of the inalienable right of every man to himself, the right of every woman to her chastity, and the sacredness of the parental relation.

To a young and enthusiastic person like Walter, whose inexperience in the world led him to suppose others would be just as ready as he to condemn a wrong or reject an error when it should be clearly proved, it was a source of the greatest perplexity why individuals standing high in the church, and making the loudest professions of philanthropy should be so indifferent to this wholesale system of plunder and concubinage, to say nothing of the immortal interests involved, wherein according to their creed it was impossible for its victims to escape the miseries of the damned. Could they lead the lives which should make them heirs of salvation when bound by the laws of the land to submit to those very sins which are denounced in the Bible as deserving of hell-fire?

With that fearless moral independence which was such a conspicuous trait in his character he spoke his honest thoughts regardless of consequences, although it was often trying to his warm-hearted and generous nature to meet the coldness of former friends who, through his whole life, had showered him with kindness, and given him their warmest benedictions, justly meriting his deepest gratitude.

But the greatest trial he had to pass through, which was as unexpected as it was painful, was the opposition of his mother. He had never dreamed that she, whose sympathies overflowed towards the whole human family, and whose hand was ever ready to assist

the unfortunate, and succor the distressed could shut her ears to the cry of the oppressed because shielded under the imposing panoply of law. It was this circumstance probably that modified the severity of his judgment and the sharpness of his criticisms which, in after years exonerated him from much of the harsh censure visited on his co-laborers in the same cause.

He saw that it was possible for people of the most honest intentions tenaciously to cling to error, and how easy it was for the conscience to be so misguided as to set the form above the substance when clothed in the imposing garb of religious ceremonials. There is no association so hard to break off as that which binds individuals together in a religious organization, and very justly so. Starting with principles founded on the highest emotions of the soul, however erroneous the intellect may be in reducing them to practice, there is a bond which has commanded the reverence of childhood, and strengthened with every succeeding year, both through storm and sunshine. The friends who have stood by us in the most solemn hours of life and proffered their words of sympathy and consolation, accompanied by deeds of kindness which should entitle them to our life-long gratitude, are not to be parted from without a struggle. Neither should any difference of opinion demand a separation from them; but at that time social standing was measured by allegiance to certain prescribed tenets of religious belief, and social proscription meted out accordingly. Few were the spirits bold enough and strong enough to breast this

popular wave of opposition, and many of those who did, lacked the discretion a few years of experience in dealing with the prejudices of the times would have taught them that much more of the evil existing in the world is perpetuated by thoughtlessness, particularly among the masses, than by a deliberate purpose to commit a wrong. Although prejudices are not to be disarmed by soft words, nor truths bluntly spoken to be dependent for success on the silver tongues that utter them, there is a certain inward perception of human nature which sees in the masses a confused mixture of noble purposes and inconsistent vagaries, causing them to vacillate between the casual gleams of some rising star of millenial glory on the one side, and superstitious bigotry for some ancient relic of heathendom on the other, and gathers their unorganized impulses into a consciousness of the merits and demands of an idea which stretches beyond the present into a future that shall actualize our conceptions, thus reaching the intuitions when reason would reject it as a delusion.

Another tendency to neutralize the progress of a reform is that spirit of timidity in a certain class of persons who recognize its beneficent objects, which leads them to ignore it out of deference to the opinion that suggests the possibility of error because others have erred before them, and that the fallibility of human nature, out of charity for itself, should attempt nothing higher than it has been found able to attain, forgetful that it was under the inspiration of their own great thought that Galileo and Luther severally pressed forward to challenge the world to a

criticism of its merits, and crystallized it into an act which has crowned their names with honor for the fidelity with which they gave expression to God's immortal purpose as it was revealed unto them, and for its benefit to the human race.

If charity is commended as the greatest of christian graces, it was never intended that it should be perverted into a cloak for unrighteousness, or that it should exert so tolerant a sway as to lose sight of the principle at stake. The mistaken views of the well-meaning, or the sensitiveness of near and dear friends afford no palliation of a great wrong which is upheld by the powerful and influential, and toward which they contribute their influence; being no less oppressive to its victims because unintentionally or blindly sanctioned.

Mrs. Claremont's brilliant hopes and anticipations in which she had indulged with all the fondness of maternal pride were thus to be dashed to the ground at the beginning of his career. She had never coveted honors or fame for the sake of reputation, but with that honest love of approbation which courts the applause of the wise and virtuous, she had looked forward to a future when Walter should be an ornament to his profession, and his moral integrity and manly independence win greater laurels still. All this she lived to see, but only with anointed vision. From worldly eyes was hidden the immortal wreath angel hands were weaving, and dusky forms were waiting to bear in grateful homage to the coronation.

The glitter of wealth and the praise of the world are of very little moment in comparison with the

sublime inspiration of an idea, but it is not so easy to disregard the feelings of a beloved friend, particularly when the apathy of others gives rise to a feeling of isolation especially desirous of their sympathy, and Walter was so accustomed to his mother's encouraging smile that it seemed almost impious to expect a blessing upon any effort which she disapproved.

Months rolled on, increasing, rather than diminishing the trials of both mother and son, and casting a shadow over the whole family. No reproachful words were ever uttered between them. They manifested the same tenderness for each other, but the barrier of prescribed opinions chilled the gushing warmth of their souls.

From the first, Walter had dreaded the dissent from his views he felt sure to encounter with Ernest. Though oftentimes differing in mere matters of opinion, there had never been any radical difference of principles between them, and Walter had generally deferred to him as being older and having more experience.

Ernest was more tenacious of the established order of things, and sought to introduce the new by preserving the old, instead of destroying the old to put the new in its place. He had unbounded reverence for man in whatever position he stood, whether high or low.

Walter revered man, but he reverenced principle more. Whatever the position of the man, if principles were disregarded, he should be called to account, because in them were embodied the rights

of the individual which are apt to be lost sight of in a collective capacity which regards only the rights of the majority.

The views of Ernest accorded generally with Mrs. Claremont, but he was more practical in his belief of the supremacy of conscience over all matters of opinion, never doubting that fidelity to it would eventually lead a person into the right path, whatever errors he might for a time embrace. He believed it to be a vital article of the Protestant faith, and a right which has existed from the foundation of the world, subject to no censorship from any human tribunal, and therefore amenable to God alone. His varied experience in contact with all classes of society, of every shade of opinion, and all creeds of religious faith, had taught him to search farther than mere professions for the true life of the soul; and he learned to regard every human being, however degraded in person or erroneous in theory, as a spark of the divine intelligence, whose absolute sovereignty in all matters of thought none can question. He had too much faith in Walter's moral perceptions and sound judgment to harbor any fear that he would embrace any serious fallacy of reasoning or unwise method of action, and never did he stand so high in his estimation as now. Knowing the sacrifice of feeling it must have cost him to adhere to his present convictions of right, he manifested all the sympathy in his power, which was deeply touching to Walter. Being a man of few words, it was very little he said upon the subject, as they did not agree, but his manner spoke louder than words.

Rosalind's enthusiastic soul was just adapted to the reception of these radical ideas, but it was little she said. With that delicate instinct which swayed them all she made no allusion to her mother's opposition, not even to her husband. All felt that a shadow was resting over their happiness and none liked to allude to it. Even little Lilly seemed to comprehend the changes in the family atmosphere, and prattled less than formerly,—perhaps because the repressed buoyancy of their spirits failed to draw her out. Nestled in her father's arms she would sometimes sit a whole hour in the evening perfectly quiet save when he caressed her and brought into her eyes a radiant gush of happiness, when she would look around the room from one to another to see if they shared it, which of course they did for her sake.

Doubts and fears arose to perplex the young man's soul. "Had I not better give it up," said he to himself, "is it not a filial duty I owe to my mother to regard her feelings in the matter? Is it not a responsibility which rests on the church alone?"

Leaving his meal untasted he arose from the tea-table and withdrew to his chamber. After pacing the floor for a few moments, he sat down by the window, mechanically turning the pages of a Bible that lay open before him on a table near. Chancing to glance at its contents his eyes rested on the passage, "Whoso loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

A new meaning suddenly emanated from those simple words, words that were as familiar to his ears as their own family names, and yet never arrested

his attention before. They applied so pointedly to his own case that all doubts fled, and his future course was immediately decided on, in which he never wavered for another moment. By the sacrifices he was ready to make must his devotion be tested.

Rosalind entered his chamber that afternoon but he took no notice of her presence. He sat at the table with his head bowed on his hands, and seeing that he was beyond the reach of human sympathy she left a kiss on his brow and silently withdrew. When she heard his elastic step on the stair and saw the cheerful smile with which his face was lighted as he entered the parlor and met his mother's glance with more confiding assurance than he had done that day, she exchanged enquiring glances with her husband who was equally surprised at the change he as quickly observed.

Mrs. Claremont had experienced as restless and painful day as Walter, which was somewhat relieved by this momentary recurrence of his wonted buoyancy of spirits, but at the same time she felt an inexplicable sense of uneasiness and anxiety as he sat down beside her. She longed for the familiar interchange of congenial sentiments which had formerly drawn their spirits together as one, and something within her queried whether in reality they were so far apart now. The harshness with which a new idea ever grates on the settled habits of the mind was beginning to wear off as she became accustomed to an unvarnished statement of facts, so that unconsciously to herself the issue between them was really of a different character from what it was at first.

She no longer doubted the imperative duty of every individual and church organization to set the seal of condemnation on the sin of slavery as a crime of the first magnitude, but instead of being satisfied with this he was going on to embrace heresies that would undermine the foundations of society. This she thought, although not rigid in her religious tenets; but age had somewhat moulded the fresh impulses of her youth into a mild form of conservatism, to which her social position of wealth and influence contributed not a little.

There is always in the wilder and uncultivated mass of society a class ready to be attracted to any novelty that comes up, whether of a moral, dramatic or tragic nature, which gives to the incipient stage of every reform an anomalous, disreputable character, repulsive to the staid habits and fixed principles of a large body of people who would otherwise flock to the same standard, and which excites the derision of a respectable and influential, but superficial order of literary genius. It generally requires a mind of more than ordinary patience of investigation, and of rare independence and strength of will to sift the question so thoroughly as to detect the wheat from the chaff when ready to meet it.

Mrs. Claremont had reached the point where she could recognize the principle that first actuated Walter, but she could not tolerate the "fanatical disorganizers" as they were termed, on the one side; and the low, motley crew on the other, with whom he was thus brought into close communion. She forgot that Christ called his followers from the despised

rabble of this world as well as from the devoted Sauls of the established church.

On retiring to rest that night she had a singular dream,—one that impressed her with a strange vividness of reality. She thought that she was a slave, and had been sold away from her mother. All the agony she had ever known, compressed into one moment, could not equal what she suffered for two hours when she lay sobbing convulsively on her mother's breast, with her master standing by, ready to grasp her at any moment. At last he bade her rise. She looked out at the window where the moon was shining brightly as if in mockery of her wo, and the trees were waving gracefully in the calm beauty of the evening's delightful solitude regardless of her suffering.

She was ready to curse the God who gave her life, and then looked complacently on the misery it brought her without interposing an avenging hand, when she felt the touch of her master's hand on her arm and bade him desist at his peril. The burning indignation with which she shrunk from his touch and defied him as if her soul were on fire, awoke her.

There she lay with no other sensation than that of awaking from peaceful slumber,—no startling emotion, no hurried breathing, the usual accompaniment of such nightmare dreams disturbed her, but she could not rid herself of the awful, frenzied desperation with which her Anglo-Saxon blood rose in revolt, contrasting it with the unrevengeful submission of the African to centuries of oppression, and the sublime fervor of his religious nature with that

spirit of rebellion which prompted her to curse the Author of her being for permitting such a violation of his revealed attributes of love and righteousness. She now made the slave's case her own, which she had never done before. With the indifference so common to us all she passed the subject by as one pertaining to some far off race which imposed no personal responsibility, without seeking to ascertain the measure of the nation's guilt, or the connection of each individual therewith. That proud Anglo-Saxon blood was humbled when confronted with the deeper religious trust of the African who could still praise God in the midst of clanking chains and bleeding wounds.

## **CHAPTER XXXIII.**

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“Get but the Truth once uttered, and 'tis like  
A star new-born, that drops into its place,  
And which, once circling in its placid round,  
Not all the tumults of the earth can shake.”

Unable to sleep any more, Mrs. Claremont arose very early the next morning. She was impatient to see Walter, and yet scarcely knew how to meet him. She wished to atone for her lack of sympathy at the moment he most needed it, not knowing that the joy of his new-born faith was greater than he could derive from any favor this world could dispense, yet so softening in its tenderness as to be doubly appreciative of the faintest ray of human cheer.

He had reached that spiritual height where commiseration for the blindness of those who sought to imprison an idea swept away every other feeling; and for them, not for himself, he breathed in earnest prayer that the divine effulgence of infinite Love might penetrate the darkness and lead them unto that peace which would make them one with God, filling their souls with the heavenly manna which cometh from above and is sufficient for all things. Then would they see the folly as well as the impotence of every attempt to roll back the onward march of human progress, whether in the intellectual achievements of science or the moral influences at work for the elevation of humanity.

Having passed the night in the peaceful repose of a quiet conscience he arose unusually early and went out in the orchard to inhale the fragrance of the fresh morning air, laden with the odors of flower and fruit, the sweet scented clover and the newly mown hay, all now baptised in one common faith by unseen agencies that needed not the laying on of earthly hands. Filled with the spirit of adoration the whole earth looked to him as if kneeling before its Maker in grateful praise for the blessings of the night in which he was ready to join.

Presently the sound of a footstep behind him disturbed his devotions, and looking round he saw his mother approaching with such a benignant smile in her eyes, that ere he was aware, his arms encircled her neck.

“ Mother ! ”

“ Walter ! ”

Not another word was said. Soul met soul, and language was needless. They walked into the house in silence where they found the rest of the family already astir. Unknown to themselves Ernest was an observer of the scene as he looked from his chamber window and called Rosalind, but she was not quick enough. At breakfast an indescribable joy pervaded the whole family as if a great shadow had been suddenly lifted, which was no less a trouble than it was only a shadow. All felt the change but none knew how it happened. Even Lilly seemed to comprehend it who slid down from her chair, and going to Walter, put her hand on his knee, and looked up into his face, as much as to say, “ Can’t you tell *me* what makes you so happy ? ”

Where now were all the heresies she had attributed to Walter? banished, like a noon-day illusion. Now that Mrs. Claremont had embraced the "spirit that giveth life," she could see how "the letter killeth." She saw that the Sabbath, which was made for man, could not be too sacred to plead for the rights of man; that the religion which was too sacred to admit the humblest to its communion as children of the same Father, and therefore entitled to the same birthright as the highest, was not worthy the name of Christian, whatever good works it might perform.

"Did not even the Pharisees the same?" "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, but he who doeth the will of the Father shall be my disciple."

What is the will of the Father? Not merely to visit the widows and the fatherless in their affliction, but to undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free. What is faith without works? Of what use the daily prayer to God that righteousness shall prevail through all the earth, without making use of the human instrumentalities he has ordained for its accomplishment?

In the following autumn Walter visited the classic ground of his Alma Mater. On the first evening of his arrival a large meeting was held to discuss those very questions to which he had consecrated his life, awaking no little interest in the community, for excitement was then at its height.

The reverend doctors of divinity, and the honorables of every profession met in solemn convocation to decide what limit should be assigned to free speech, and how far a man should be amenable to God in

yielding to the dictates of his conscience. Rev. Dr. Southron opened the meeting with prayer, which consisted more in a statement of its objects than an approach to the throne of Grace for wisdom to be guided in an impartial verdict, after which he made a short address, taking for his text, "The powers that be are ordained of God," inculcating the principle that governments are divine, and resistance to them a crime against God and man. Then he proceeded to show what constitutes rebellion against a government, and what course should be pursued toward those who stirred up sedition and revolt. "If we let them go on," said he, "what anarchy and confusion will follow, divisions in the church, dissensions in society, and the overthrow of all law." He closed with an argument in defence of slavery based on the Bible, beginning with the patriarch Abraham and the Mosaic law, and ending with the since threadbare tale of Paul and Onesimus under the new dispensation.

This was going rather farther than most of the audience were ready to endorse, not being yet quite enough indoctrinated into the southern catechism to answer in the affirmative: "Is not the chief end of man to glorify God by enslaving his brother so that he may also teach him to glorify him?"

They believed in submission to the laws whether good or bad, in standing by the country, whether right or wrong, but it was a bitter pill to swallow on the soil of the Pilgrims, concocted of the alien idea that a ten-fold worse oppression than that they sought to escape should promote the very end they had in

view. There was a slight murmur of disapprobation when he took his seat, which, however, was quickly suppressed as the silver tongued orator, whose name was a synonym for all that was chaste in language and classical in style, arose to defend the Union. He sped an arrow's flight beyond the comprehension of the people who could see very little connection between the elements of that massive structure and the consequences likely to result from the unlimited exercise of free speech. He was, however, vociferously cheered, as every word coming from his lips would be, if it had been expressed in an unintelligible language. At the close of his remarks, another gentleman arose who took exception to some of his sentiments.

"There was no need," he said, "to defend the Union, for that rested on a foundation as sure as the everlasting hills. Our fathers made it, and we have no right to question its integrity, or doubt its stability. Let us not harbor a thought that it can be rent asunder by any force brought to assail it, the possibility of which it would be a sin to admit, a libel on the wisdom of our fathers!"

A strong feeling of dissatisfaction was here manifested by the audience, who, though they in no wise differed from the last speaker, would not tolerate the appearance of dissent from any sentiment advanced by their pet orator. The latter was also evidently misunderstood, for his remarks were intended more as a rhetorical flourish to pass encomiums on those who framed the Union and present them as models for the present generation to follow, than to intimate

danger, thus conveying a negative rebuke of that spirit which assumed to be wiser than they. This was more to his taste, and accorded better with his method of dealing with an evil than positive condemnation.

True, he was in favor of making free speech an indictable offense, but his argument was so plausibly worded as to make it appear something else than an open denial of the constitutional right of freedom of speech. His intentions might not have been bad, nothing more nor less than to preserve the fraternal feeling he supposed to exist between the north and south, without which the ship of state would flounder; and all these magnificent proportions of an over-arching structure which stretched forth its friendly arms to embrace the oppressed of all lands who sought its protection, would crumble into atoms.

The slave, what was he? Only a wedge to make it still firmer, the fruit of whose toil would help to swell the streams of benevolence so profusely applied to the evangelization of heathen lands. Did he suffer? No matter, if thereby the Union was made stronger.

Before order was fully restored a young man was seen to approach the stand, a stranger to most who occupied it, but familiar to many persons in the galleries who shouted and cheered anew; for what reason they did not themselves know. It was Walter Claremont. No little interest was manifested at the youthful appearance of one who had the boldness to come forward after so much distinguished talent, and his winning appearance prepossessed all in his

favor. He stood, surveying the audience until silence reigned throughout the crowded hall.

"Law *is* divine," said he. "From the starry worlds overhead to the minutest insect at our feet, law is the one great fact which binds every object and every being to an immutable fiat that is coeval with creation, and which our puny efforts may strive in vain to oppose. The same is true of the moral world. God has written his law in every human soul, with the penalties annexed for its violation ; and as well might you attempt to blot Arcturus from the skies as to evade its retributions on the evil doer. What is government ? The reverend gentleman who occupied this platform asserts that governments are divine, when all history teems with their sacrilegious proceedings. Or does he mean simply that this government is divine ? If so, where is its sign-manual ? The proper function of law as applied to society, is the protection of the rights of the individual. When it fails in this it is no longer binding on the conscience, according to the authority of one of the brightest lights in jurisprudence, whence this nation borrowed its common law. In other words all human enactments must conform to the natural or revealed law before they can impose obligations to obey them, since that is coeval with mankind and dictated by God himself; of binding force over all the globe in all countries, and at all times. The reverend gentlemen raises the objection, that if every one were allowed to follow the dictates of his own conscience, anarchy would soon follow ; and draws a lamentable picture of divisions in the church, civil war and a

whole catalogue of evils, if a person be allowed to speak his own honest thought and call a sin a sin, whether committed in high places or low. Does he think we shall avoid them by continuing in our wickedness? Is that the kingdom of God he was sent to preach? Dare he stand in the sacred desk and ask the blessing of God on his efforts to christianize the heathen of foreign lands, when defending a system which denies the Bible to the heathen on our own shores? Nay, more, who charges Him with giving it his divine sanction?

"There is a certain recognized moral standard which requires no logic for its interpretation, nor scholastic display of forensic ability to decide its claims on the conscience, being as clear and indisputable to the simplest child as to the most learned professor. Once admit that we may legislate crime into a law, and what becomes of our obligations to God? What anchor have we to prevent us from drifting on the dark and dismal shores of Atheism the moment we set up injustice as the bulwark of a nation's safety,—the God whom we are commanded to worship and obey? In vain may you plead laws and precedents; inferiority of race, or christianizing influences if that were possible; you cannot abate one iota of the crime you commit when you take from a single human being, however degraded or debased, one of the absolute rights that are the birth-right of humanity.

"Injustice may flourish for a while, and the nation grow rich on its spoils, but so sure as He sits on the throne of the universe, there will not be wanting at

the appointed time a Moses or a Joshua to lead forth the oppressed from their long captivity, in vindication of their outrages at the hands of those who have assumed prerogatives that belong only to the Almighty.

“ Allusion has been made to the dangerous tendency of free speech, and in the same connection the memory of our fathers commended to the highest reverence and their example presented as worthy of all imitation. Who was it that said, errors of opinion might be safely tolerated where reason was left free to combat them, and trembled for his country when he reflected that God was just, and had no attribute that would take side with the oppressor? Who described that crime for denouncing which this meeting has been convened to call us to account, as ‘one hour of which is fraught with more misery than ages of that which our fathers rose in rebellion to oppose?’

“ A gentleman here says that the Union ‘rests on a foundation as sure as the everlasting hills.’ Did not the Eternal City claim a foundation just as sure, and what has been her subsequent history? Go on if you will, and close every avenue to free discussion, the mind will still be left to conquer, whose empire is absolute and irresistible, and which has itself the power to snap this Union in sunder when it shall no longer serve the purpose for which it was intended.

“ Under the despotisms of the old world it may be possible to smoulder free discussion at the point of the bayonet, but not in a republic where every man’s

thought is a power in the state and the life of the government.

"Again and again has constitutional liberty turned on this very point, and again and again has it been baptized in the blood of the martyrs who defended and bequeathed it to us their children as the richest heritage God or man can bestow. Shall we be recreant to the trust and barter away this glorious *magna-charter* of our liberties, that the most flagrant crime that ever darkened the universe of God may pursue its mad career!

"You cannot imprison the immortal soul of man. An emanation from the divine One who spurns alike the lordly tyrant and the cowering slave, it is ever towering upward to meet the stature of its prototype.

"Ye learned doctors of divinity and versed exponents of the law, tell me if you can where, in the annals of paganism, or the advancing light of civilization, you can point to a single nation that has laid its corner-stone in the violated instincts of the human soul, and reared its pillars at the expense of its own acknowledged principles of justice, without meeting sooner or later those convulsions that upheave the foundations of society in the struggle for the maintenance of those rights which antedate every text and every parchment. The spirit of the Pilgrims who first sought these shores that they might enjoy unmolested the blessings of civil and religious liberty, still lives on this soil. You cannot conquer it, for it is invincible. Heed it, be guided by it before it is too late! Once submit to the dictation of the myrmidons of the south, and before this generation shall

have passed away, you will witness one of the bloodiest civil wars on record."

An awe-struck silence pervaded the assembly when he took his seat. They were so taken by surprise that passion forgot to vent itself. All were spell-bound, and it was some moments before the chairman arose, when the meeting was adjourned.

Many of Walter's old classmates were present, who went to express their sympathy with the objects of the meeting in whatever way accorded best with their spirit and inclination ; either by cheering those who defended them or interrupting any who might chance to speak in opposition. They were professed " law and order " men, as ready to instigate a mob for their preservation as to institute a well-ordered police to guard the peace. Though graduated at a university, they had not been taught to know the difference. Exceptions existed of course, but they were of too modest and lukewarm a character to volunteer their honest opinions in the face of overwhelming opposition. All, however, were for the moment swayed by an involuntary sense of admiration. There was something so bold and manly in the moral courage he had displayed, so truthful in his utterances and instructive in his prophetic warnings, as to command a hearty response from the untrammeled impulses of their souls, then just passing under the tuition which afterwards culminated in such melancholy expositions of the " higher law," and garbled interpretations of scripture texts, by which, when the laws of God and man conflict, the latter have been made to appear the better of the two to people of *easy consciences*.

## **CHAPTER XXXIV.**

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"Love, which proclaims the human, bids thee know  
A truth more lofty in thy lowliest hour  
Than shallow glory taught to human power,—  
**WHAT'S HUMAN IS IMMORTAL!"**

June came again,—June with its wealth of roses and lovely green, its clear skies and breezy nights, bringing scarcely less of joy and gladness, beauty and song to the outward world than to the loving and happy spirits of Orange Grove. The whole family were planning an excursion to the sea-side during a few weeks of the hottest season, which promised quite a change for them, as they rarely felt any inducement strong enough to tempt them away from their own pleasant home. Lilly appeared to feel the most care of any one about going, and really looked quite sad at the thought of leaving the two little kittens and the rabbit, whose frolics together amused her for hours, and sometimes caused her to be quite noisy as she clapped her hands and shouted at the retaliation of old puss if they unceremoniously broke in upon her meditations when not disposed to join in their levity, though she said she thought it was a prettier sight to see her play with them. Then who would keep the chickens, also her pets, out of her garden, which had received quite an addition to its former dimensions, in fulfillment of a promise her

father made the previous summer because she wanted "vegables" as well as flowers. Finally every thing was settled to her satisfaction. Kate promised to feed the kittens and take care of the garden, and she looked forward to the anticipated journey with as much joy as any of them, provided they did not go before her peas were large enough to eat, as she was to have a little dinner party then, to be served from her own garden. There was no end to her questions about the probable growth of everything during their absence, asking her father to drive in a stake before they left, about as high as he thought her corn would reach when they returned, to see how good he was for guessing. The oats she thought might be quite ripe so she could feed them to the horse. "Oh father, what if they should all dry up and wither before I get back ; then I should wish I had took a little sketch of my garden," said she laughing and jumping at the novelty of the idea.

But one bright summer morning, when the air resounded with the song of birds, and the hum of bright winged insects testified to the gladness of their short life ; when the sun's penetrating rays quickened the earth's vegetation with the promise of golden harvests, the Heavenly Reaper came to gather in his more than golden treasure which needed neither summer rain nor autumn sun to perfect it for his hands. Lilly, the May-flower, sickened and died. No skill could save her, no rending cry of anguish could wrest her from death's grasp. Her mission on earth was ended, angels waited to bear her spirit joyfully to the other shore, and beautifully,

lovingly, she took her flight. Towards noon she came to her mother and laid her head in her lap, saying "Mother, will you please take me up, I'm so tired!"

A high fever already coursed through her veins, and she fell a victim to a mortal disease very prevalent among children that summer; but she had always been so healthy not one of the family had thought of feeling any anxiety for her. Little were they aware how firmly their affections were centred in her, or how important a part she formed of every plan for the future. If the thought ever suggested itself that she might not live, it was banished with a feeling akin to that a child feels for a mother, who, associated with every moment of life, and sharing every joy and sorrow as no other person can, forms such an essential part of existence, that the thought of parting with her is as unwelcome as a nightmare dream.

Lilly did not suffer as much as some. During most of the time she lay in a languid state, smiling faintly when spoken to, and seldom making an effort to speak. She died in her father's arms, and the last words she said were, "Father, I cannot see you now; but you can see my picture."

That picture! The death Angel touched it and straightway it was transfigured into a celestial beauty earthly hands could not impart, nor earthly passions take away. But who shall describe that father's anguish! During her sickness he had scarcely eaten or slept, and his nervous system was now prostrated. As long as there was life he felt there was hope, and

even after the vital spark had fled he reluctantly gave her up, not until Rosalind whispered, "Shall we not restore unto God his own?"

Her fortitude through it all was remarkable. She was redeeming the pledge made unto God at the time of her marriage. If her experience had taught her anything it was that she had no right to assume any voluntary relation that should subject her to the vicissitudes of life and death, unless willing to meet them more submissively than she had done the loss of her father. Often had she renewed this pledge, as day by day she watched the unfolding of this fair flower, and asked herself the question, "If this treasure should be called for at my hands, could I give her up?"

Then leaving a kiss on that innocent brow she strove within herself to feel that she was only lent, not given. She marvelled at her own strength in this hour of trial, but, was anything ever asked of God in prayer that was not granted? All the exquisite tenderness of her nature burst forth, and she turned from the dead now at rest to the living who needed her consolation and support, banishing her own grief in ministering unto others. In her self-forgetfulness lay her strength, and the sight of her husband's sorrow made her rise above her own.

Mrs. Claremont was the animating spirit of the house. So cheerfully she set about the performance of every duty, and attended to all that had been Lilly's special care, those parents felt that it would have been an act of ingratitude to have appeared otherwise than cheerful in her presence. From the

little garden she gathered flowers to make a wreath to encircle her head, and an opening white rosebud to place in her hand, while at the head she placed the little vase that had been supplied with a bouquet throughout the season, arranged by Lilly's own hands, and which was still preserved in its old place on her mother's work-table, and as tenderly cared for by Mrs. Claremont.

What sight is more touchingly beautiful than that of an infant shrouded for the tomb? How innocent is the expression of every feature! How symbolic the little hands, of a perfect trust in the great Father's watchful care over all, as they repose so naturally on the little bosom that will never again heave in anguish or shake with laughter.

The family circle seems scarcely complete without the presence of an angel child. While others bring care and anxiety, if not sorrow to their parents, one they may always point to as pure and undefiled, ministering in the Father's kingdom, to win them from the attractions of this world through this nearer glimpse of heaven, sometimes coming in the silent watches of the night, or sanctifying daily toil with the hallowed breath of inspiration. Not alone through joy and sunshine, but through pain and tears, love is strengthened; and we are false to the highest teachings of revelation, if for every tie that is severed, we do not make propitiation to the living by fresh efforts to raise the standard of family devotion above the petty bickerings and jealousies which are born of the passions, and can have no affinity with the higher faculties of the soul that are to fit her for the im-

mortal destiny for which she was created and toward which she is tending.

• Human tears are God's dew-drops, not always the symbol of sadness, but the workings of the most sacred emotions, which are thus softened and purified until the soul responds with the most touching sincerity, The Father's will be done !

Though Mr. Livingston tried hard to appear reconciled he could not conceal the heavy grief that settled upon his spirits. He sought to banish it by close application to his pencil, but the little silky brown head claimed admission there, and drove all other subjects from his mind. He journeyed, but the infinite charm that had been wont to steal over his senses when he gave himself up to revelry among the scenes of nature, had suddenly departed, and in its stead came another charm, one of peculiar sacredness, revealing an angel presence ever flitting before him and dulling his senses to the perception of other objects. Accompanied by Rosalind, it was only in her society that he found any consolation, either at home or abroad. She always met him with a cheerful smile which elicited one in return, and that grief must be very obdurate which will not give way in the presence of two smiling faces.

It was a hallowed hour in that lonely home, one of tender and sacred memory ; when another form constantly glided before and whispered to them words of the most endearing love. Whether at home or abroad, on the velvet turf or in the dusty street, whcrever the foot pressed or the eye rested, the little silky brown head came to remind them of

other days and turn their thoughts heavenward  
whither she called them.

But, " 'Tis the work  
Of many a tear, and of many a prayer,  
To win the heart back from an infant gone."

At times the floods of human sorrow dashed in overwhelming surges against the anchor they thought was moored fast in the peaceful waters of a wise resignation. And the garden ; O Earth, how canst thou smile on in such bitter mockery of human wo ? Ah, it is a decree of God's own ordination, whereby, if a seed die it shall rise again and put forth new verdure, prophetic also of the resurrection of every joy in that immortal sphere toward which all are hastening.

There was another upon whom Lilly's death fell as a heavy stroke of affliction, to whom Mrs. Claremont sought to administer all the consolation feeble words could convey ; feeble indeed, for they fall so far short of what the soul craves at such times, that it is almost a mockery to utter them. And yet will all these little kind offices be treasured up in the storehouse of memory as precious mementoes which will not fail to be appreciated in the maturer wisdom of future years.

There are as many different kinds of affection in the world as there are different mental organizations. One kind is strong, ardent, full of enthusiasm and demonstration, like Rosalind. Another kind, just as strong, just as ardent, but so quiet and undemonstrative, as scarcely to reveal its existence until some shock threatens to rend asunder the very heartstrings

of life, was illustrated in Milly. Isolated as she was in every human tie, her affection for Lilly had stirred her soul's depths as they were never stirred before. When sighing for one more touch of that little hand, one more gentle pressure of that soft cheek against her own, one more merry twinkle of those eyes before which sadness vanished like the misty morning vapors before the rising sun, Mrs. Claremont, divining her feelings, thus soliloquized, "Why shut up in the dark tomb all the rich blossoming of that young life? Why not permit it to exhale its fragrance among these numberless relics that need only its inspiring breath to consecrate them as joyous mementoes of the love and happiness this world has the capacity to confer, and the other world claims only to purify and perfect? She is leading us into the deep waters that we may gather thence its choicest pearls."

A new idea was suggested to Milly. She turned to her novel with a fresh interest, and felt the quickening of new powers, and revelations of a higher order of beauty for which those latent germs of undefined aspirations had struggled from her earliest memory to be developed into their highest capabilities. Very different from those labored effusions which excited Kate's facetious criticisms—the passages now coming from her pen were full of meaning and rich with inspiration. Lilly was no longer a departed spirit, but a presiding genius that stood between her and the pages of her book, ready to interpret those dark phases of human experience which for a time shut us out from the beauty and glory of this out-

ward world that the inner vision may become clearer, when, purified and sanctified, clothed, and in our right mind, we may sit down at the right hand of Jesus, accepting his condition, "That unless we become like one of these little ones, we can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven."

But as novels, even of the highest order, should serve only as recreation, instead of food for the mind, there is a higher and more practical work to be engaged in than writing them, if it is only to carry out the ideas presented, and to this work Milly was destined. The rich poetry of that inner life was to burst forth in deeds more beautiful than any sketches flowing from her pen; not to be compressed within the mute pages of a book, which, however, served a high purpose as a precept for the rule of her life. She had no sooner written it than the high standard she had presented struck her as being too visionary for realization, and fearing the strong pictures she had drawn of the strength and omnipotence of affection had received too high a coloring from her own sensitive organization, it met with the fate so often assigned to real merit, in never being permitted to enrich the world with its treasures of thought, but they were nevertheless incorporated into her daily life and she experienced the blessed consolation of knowing that she had neither dreamed idly nor turned into a mere visionary enthusiast.

## **CHAPTER XXXV.**

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"Those laughing orbs, that borrow  
From azure skies the light they wear,  
Are like heaven—no sorrow  
Can float o'er hues so fair."

The merry month of May again came round, bearing in its bosom a merry gift for those stricken parents. Another daughter was born, not the counterpart of Lilly, but that was no matter. A baby had come to enliven the oppressive stillness of the house, which was never still afterwards, and therefore was thrice welcome. Full of life and motion she demanded as much attention as one little body could well lay claim to. She never folded her hands so meekly, you could almost fancy the bliss of heaven clasped there, as Lilly had been wont to do. From the time her eyes were open in the morning until they closed at night, was one gala-day of fun and frolic. Her merry laugh apprised every one of her approach, and her tireless activity and thoughtless love of mischief required constant amusement and watchfulness. At nine months of age she walked, and then not a work-basket, trinket or anything else could be left within reach that did not suffer from her roguish fingers. When there is such a dominant love of fun it is almost impossible to keep a child out of mischief, not from a wanton love of it, but from

an unconquerable desire to laugh at the effects of it. Her sunny temper was never ruffled by the vexatious queries so annoying to her mother's childhood. Having blue eyes and curly hair, she resembled her somewhat, yet not so much as that picture of her father's which first arrested Walter's attention and opened the way for their acquaintance. She sometimes visited her father's studio, but only to misplace every thing she could lay her hands upon and add variety to his sketches after her own plan. The whole house was at her command and she reigned queen over them all, for no one could think of being impatient with the source of so much happiness. Mr. Livingston seemed quite like himself again, and Kate, who had been the impersonation of gravity since the death of Lilly, finding no words to express her grief, made the house ring with music as she kept time to the patter of childish glee. This was better fun than criticising Milly's novel, a theme already exhausted for her, and she seldom intruded into that sanctum now. Better also than settling the troubles of young house-keepers, or enumerating "Sykes" adventures. Such is the unconscious power of childhood.

"Will mother have a full blown rose this morning?" said Mr. Livingston as he brought her in crowned for the first time with a wreath of flowers as he had often crowned Lilly in her babyhood. Her rosy, dimpled cheeks and joyous laugh showed how fully and keenly she entered into the lively appreciation of every pleasure the physical world affords. Hear her now as she gives a jerk to free her hands

from her father's clasp, who holds them the more tightly to prevent her from tearing the wreath from her head ere her mother sees it, which she very well understands. And when he does let go how quickly it falls crushed and mutilated at his feet; and then hear the ringing laugh! And the next moment she is out of his arms and out of sight, playing, "bo-peep!" and ere he can catch her, away again.

Once while Kate had her in charge in the vicinity of Milly's room, the latter left the door ajar for a second as she stepped into the hall, which the little Rosie quickly perceived and bent thitherward her nimble feet. The next instant the inkstand was upset over a pile of manuscript. "Why Rosie, what won't you do next?" exclaimed Milly as the devastating sight met her eyes. Kate ran in to see what had happened and laughed as she remarked,

"A rather melancholy end for your novel to come to isn't it?"

On looking for the child she was not to be found up stairs or down. Kate at last espied her behind a large rocker in her grand-mother's chamber in a little niche that would just admit her, with eyes so wild and big as to be scarcely recognized, and curled up in the smallest possible space. She looked so comical that she ran to call Mr. Livingston, who had just entered. He could scarcely suppress a smile at the unwonted seriousness of that roguish little head which sought to retreat farther back, showing how keen a child's instinct is to comprehend that it has done something wrong, deserving of reproof, being then only a year and a half old. Reluctantly she

left her place of refuge as he lifted her into his arms to visit the scene of her unlucky exploit. This was too much for that little bosom to contain, and he was obliged to give her to Kate to console, which she quickly did by proposing a game at "hide-and-seek!"

The little golden haired girl who made her first appearance at Mrs. Claremont's when Walter placed her in Rosalind's lap that Thanksgiving evening they visited her mother in her distress, had been adopted into the family at her mother's death which occurred shortly after Lilly was taken from them, and was now an interesting girl of twelve years. Her devotion to the child made her a most trusty caretaker, and being full of sunshine herself, the atmosphere about them was so merry there was no room for a cloud of sadness even to hover about those parents now, or if so, they felt it would be a sin not to dispel it at once, although never cherishing the feeling of security upon such a treasure they once did.

## **CHAPTER XXXVI.**

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"There I maddened. Life swept through me into fever,  
And my soul sprang up astonished—sprang full statured in an  
hour;  
Know you what it is when anguish with apocalyptic Never  
To a Pythian height dilates you, and despair sublimes to power?"

It is well human nature is so constituted that one's joy is not banished by another's sorrow, otherwise there would be no enjoyment in this life. To every individual, sooner or later, comes his own trial-hour, and that is sufficient for himself. The world may not know of it, but no matter, the purification goes on, and the inaudible sigh is not unheard in heaven's chancery, whether surrounded by the music and mirth of loving friends, or the thoughtless indifference of those who are incapable of extending the cordial grasp of sympathy.

While the vicissitudes of life were bringing their alternate sunshine and shade to peaceful homes in the lovely vale of the Connecticut, mellowed and sanctified by the transfiguring touch of love in which the human was blended with the divine; on the banks of the Tennessee, passion was contending for the mastery with love, and in the end came off conqueror.

Mrs. Carleton's first impressions of Southern life were not of the most agreeable character, which, however, gradually wore off, until, like other northern

ladies, she yielded to their customs, and even the repugnance at being waited on by slaves was soon overcome, the more readily as the change of climate at that season of the year enervated her physical energies.

As Mr. Carleton was seldom cruel unless roused by some strong passion, and his plantation not an extensive one, his wife was never witness of the worst features of slavery, if by this term we mean the greatest physical suffering. Deeming kindness the most effectual barrier against the crime of running away, when they showed their ingratitude by doing so, he was as merciless as any other. During his residence in the north he had been led to doubt considerably the expediency of slave labor, from the contrast continually presented between northern thrift and southern indolence, but his convictions on this point never touched upon the first grain of principle and were soon forgotten on his return to its borders.

The most of his slaves were inherited from his father, whose death occurred a short time previous to his acquaintance with Miss Blanche. One beautiful brunette he bought soon after his marriage for a waiting maid for his wife, who seemed well enough pleased with the selection, inasmuch as she shared the northern prejudice against color, and such familiar contact with the African race as the Southern mode of life produced, was extremely repulsive to the staid influences of her northern education.

This slave had just enough of the negro blood in her veins to ripple her hair slightly, which was of the glossiest black, and impart to her countenance that

doubtful hue, which puzzles the beholder to know whether the flesh and blood he sees before him is an unmixed specimen of the superior race, and thus entitled to the rank and privileges of a human being, or whether, owing to the vices of that superior race, sanctioned by the existing laws of the land, a chattel slave is the highest rank to which this immortal soul can ever aspire. She bore none of the badges of servitude, her carriage and mien resembling more the northern prostitute, than the submissive victim of southern institutions. Lost to all sense of degradation she gloried in her fascinating power over others, for at the same time she held her master in thrall, her mistress was so won over by her proffered kindness and thousand little acts of dissimulation, that the slightest breath of reproach from any of the fellow slaves would not have been tolerated by her, but this confidence was of short duration.

Mrs. Carleton was not a woman of an investigating mind. Of benevolent impulses, she delighted in relieving cases of suffering that came immediately under her observation, but of their causes and character she knew far less than Rosalind, or even Milly. She was none of the world's deep thinkers. Gaining the affections of all who saw her by her rare charms of manner and conversation, and possessing also a dignity that forbade any unbecoming familiarity with inferiors, at the same time that she mingled respect with condescension, the spirit of caste was not offended, and she was no less a favorite in her new home among all classes than she had been at the north. No one who saw her in the opening bloom of

womanhood, gliding about on her errands of mercy, could have imagined that the future had in store for her such a mingled cup of bitterness and strife. None probably had met with less to discipline the character up to the time of her marriage.

Another slave, about the age of Mr. Carleton, and once a particular favorite of the family, though by no means the counterpart of the brunette, either in personal attractions or profligacy of character, deeply aggravated by a sense of the wrongs she had suffered, could not brook with indifference this new invasion of her own domain, nor the duplicity thus carried on before the eyes of the unsuspecting wife. By nature of a meek, inoffensive disposition, the degradation to which she had been forced roused all the spirit within her, and she assumed a tone of defiance toward all but Mrs. Carleton, in whose presence a habitual melancholy had always pervaded her features, exciting her curiosity to know something of her previous history, which, failing to learn from her husband, she resolved to gain from the slave herself. He divined this, either from his adroitness in reading the expression of the human countenance, or from mere conjecture, and forthwith established a system of surveillance which was rendered complete by introducing this young slave to be the constant companion of her mistress, thus rendering all interviews between her and the elder slave impossible. It was a source of no little discomfiture to the latter to be thus supplanted by the young brunette, not only for the loss of station she had lately enjoyed in being the first in her master's confidence, which she prized in spite of her contempt

for him, but also in being deprived of the society of her mistress to whom she was becoming strongly attached.

Mr. Carleton soon found himself between two fires. He was obliged to conciliate the one and studiously avoid giving offence to the other, since only in maintaining his sway over their feelings and fears, could he hope to preserve, undisturbed by jealousy, the reverence and affections of his wife. His attentions to her in the meantime never waned, either in tenderness or devotion, manifested by the many little acts which would promote her comfort or increase her happiness.

Ten years passed by, ten years of agony to the hopeless slave from whose nightly couch arose earnest supplications for deliverance from the house of bondage ; ten years of guilt and shame to the hardened master thus heaping upon himself tenfold more of retribution against the day of judgment ; ten years of mingled joy and sorrow, hopes and fears, doubts and anxieties to the young wife, who, undisturbed by the gross violation of all the sanctities of humanity in the midst of which she lived, because sanctioned by existing laws and therefore must be endured, was then called to face the fearful chasm into which all that was dearest and best of her life's being had been cast.

Whatever misgivings she might have harbored concerning her husband's character were carefully locked within her own bosom, and he believed her still in ignorance, when, suffering from an attack of brain fever, some delirious expressions escaped her

which were sufficient to convince him that she was not so unsuspecting as he had imagined. From that time his manner changed, and before she recovered his neglect became so marked that a return of the fever was feared in consequence of the effect on her nerves.

The elder slave woman, who had been so aggrieved at being separated from her mistress, was now permitted to attend her, and nursed her as tenderly as a mother. When the patient was so far convalescent as to talk without injury, she besought Chrissy, her nurse, to relate her history.

"Not now, honey," she replied, "for it is a long, sad story, and 'pears like it might give you a misery somewhere. There now honey, lie down and rest you and I'll sing the New Jerusalem."

As the shrill notes of her sonorous voice rung out clear and loud upon the evening air, accompanied by that swaying motion of the body which attends their highest state of exaltation, Mrs. Carleton was reminded of an old legend familiar to the days of her childhood, of an elfish looking woman who was said to inhabit a certain retired locality in her native city, where her wild song often resounded through the midnight air, though no one was ever able to trace her home, where she came from or what became of her. Her sleep that night was disturbed by fearful forebodings of the future, until towards morning when a quiet slumber was varied with pleasant dreams of home, a home such as it should be, where in the society of her two children, her time was divided between her attentions to them

and some benevolent mission, such as she had once engaged in at the north, bringing the most pleasurable reminiscences of old friends and scenes long since forgotten.

Being in too weak a state for the mind to throw off these unfavorable reactions, it was many days before any improvement was discernible, and Chrissy, whose quick perceptions readily divined the cause of her protracted recovery, was so guarded in all her inquiries concerning the state of her health and topics of conversation generally, always omitting any reference to Mr. Carleton, that her patient was well aware of her comprehension of the true nature of the case. As she lay one day absorbed in reflection the sight of the swarthy face so pitifully fixed upon her filled her with a most painful apprehension, and she again entreated her for a sketch of her history. This time she refused, shaking her head ominously, and heaved a deep sigh as her eyes vacantly rested on a large magnolia tree that stood sentinel at the corner of the lawn. Chrissy was what is denominated among the blacks a "yaller woman," a term sometimes significant of a doubtful kind of esteem, either from a dim sense of its immorality, or an inherent feeling of contempt for these mongrel specimens of races, representing neither one nor the other, and which do often excite a painful sensation as if nature had stepped out of her course, when the yellowish skin is accompanied with eyes and hair of the same hue. She was rather dark, and her eyes were more of a gray, her hair straight and black, so that she would about as readily pass for a dark skinned white

woman, as a representative of the African race. Standing on the average level of moral perceptions she would have maintained a virtuous character in an ordinary community, and that she could not do so here, added to her sense of degradation and rendered her indifferent to anything higher.

The brunette was still there, now the presiding mistress of the house, exciting both the hatred and contempt of the other slaves, by her assumed superiority over them, as if a free white woman. Mrs. Carleton had long since dispensed with her attendance, since which time she had maintained a more independent position than before. She followed her business as seamstress, subject to the control of no one, not even of her master, over whom she had obtained such unlimited sway that every desire was granted, and her wardrobe equalled that of her mistress in beauty and richness.

The time came at length when Chrissy volunteered an account of herself. Mrs. Carleton had gained strength rapidly for a few days, having nerved herself to bear her fate with becoming resignation, and resolved that her happiness for the future should be centered in her two children, a son and daughter, both of whom closely resembled their mother. She intended to preserve them as much as possible from the demoralizing influences by which they were surrounded, and instil into their minds northern ideas and the precepts that had formed the basis of her own education. Not yet fully awake to the crippling nature of slave institutions, it had not occurred to her that they could interpose a barrier between the

white mother and her child, by laying any restriction upon the widest range of development the highest moral training could promote.

The children were soon removed from her control by the introduction of a governess to whom was assigned the entire supervision of their education. This was done without consulting her at all, and but for the strongest effort of self-control, her nerves would have again been shattered by this insult to her sacred relation of wife and mother. Realizing her helplessness to change the current domestic affairs were taking, she considered it the wisest course to get along with as few words as possible, always having regarded a family outbreak as one of the most painful things to be dreaded.

Soon after this Mr. Carleton started on a business tour which was to take him to New Orleans, and no little surprise was excited when it was discovered that the brunette was also missing, but whether they had left together, or she had taken advantage of the opportunity to secure her own freedom, all of them were equally at a loss to conjecture. One thing was ascertained that she did not leave the city with him, which was hardly to be expected under any supposition, as they would be much more likely to meet on the route. All her jewelry and the most valuable articles of her ward-robe were gone, and what were Chrissy's amazement and dismay, when by some unerring instinct she was led to her only secret drawer containing the only treasure now remaining of her master's former regard, a gold ring, and found it was no longer there! Her rage knew no bounds. She

tore her hair, stamped on the bed formerly occupied by the brunette and whatever else remained that she could in any way deface. It was the more aggravating that she had often shook this ring in scorn at her rival for presuming to tell her that he never cared for her, which was also resented by warning her that such would be her fate, when age should in the least rob her of her charms.

Then rushing into Mrs. Carleton's room, who turned deadly pale at this sudden outbreak of passion, she vehemently exclaimed, "Yes, I *will* tell you all, no matter if he is your husband, he'll soon enough be of no account to you. He robbed me of every thing, and then brought this vile wench here to insult and plunder me, but bless me honey, what am I doing? I forgot that you was *his* wife."

Here she stopped abruptly, wringing her hands desperately, and struck with terror at the thought of her boldness and its consequences, when she saw her mistress sink down in a chair as if ready to swoon. By a strong effort Mrs. Carleton soon rallied, and, anxious to hear what this strange woman had to say, urged her to go on as calmly as she could. Chrissy softened down considerably at the sight of her agitation, and in a quiet, submissive tone proceeded.

"I beg your pardon, missus, but there are times when I forget that I am a despicable slave, and think only of myself as an outraged woman, and then such a misery as I have here (laying her hand on her bosom), I feel as if I my heart was bleedin' at its roots. And then when I come to think of the blessed Jesus,

and how he suffered and how they put a crown of thorns on his head, and how mighty pretty he bore it all and only asked to have 'em forgiven, I'se so happy to think he was willin' to come down here and die for us and then be nailed on to the cross on Cavalry, I'se willin' to suffer any thing. But you see I forgets him when the troubles heaps upon me," throwing her arms passionately across her breast, and violently rocking to and fro, as a fresh sense of her wrongs swept over her. •Whether it is owing to the uncultivated state of their religious convictions, and the general neglect of moral training, or the familiarity with the Deity to which their large imagination has prompted them, in the absence of earthly friends to hear the story of their suffering; there is in the African race a strange mixture of religious enthusiasm and earthly passion in the same breath. Possessing an uncommon share of the devotional element, they have an inherent sense of the mercy and goodness of God, and an unfaltering faith in his promises, that belongs to no other race. Apparently through outside forces the most propitious soil for its development, Atheism finds no foothold there. Visions of the New Jerusalem and the Heavenly Land have led them through the fiery furnace of outraged affection and excruciating tortures, until they reached those shores where master and slave know no other distinction than the unerring scales of justice award to them. Steadfast in their belief in immortality, all the sufferings of this life are swallowed up in glorious anticipations of its realities.

Chrissy arose and religh ed her pipe, a powerful

sedative in reconciling them to their fate, according to their own confession ; and after smoking for a few moments, gave her brief narrative, only relating its most striking points.

"I was raised in old Virginny, but I won't give the first particulars of my life, which you will be soon enough to find out, but honey, I wish you'd smoke a pipe, it would make you feel so much better, it does me so much good when I have a trouble. I was about sixteen when my old master brought us here with the rest of his things, about sixty head of us in all, mostly field-hands, but I had a sister a little older, a house servant, who was married to my master's coachman, and they had one child. A slave trader came one day and wanted to buy her, offerin' a right smart price, but he didn't want the child. My master would not consent to separate 'em at first for she was a pretty creetur and so was the child, but he wanted the money, and the bargain was made. To do the thing up as quiet as possible, the child was sent off to a neighboring plantation on some pretence, when she was told to get ready as quick as she could. Such screeches as she made frightened me and I tried to beg her off. We had both been treated well, and as I was very near of kin I felt sure he would listen to me. All the answer I got was that he would sell me too if I didn't shut up. So with a crack of the driver's whip she was hurried into the cart and I never see her again. Her husband took on mighty bad that night when he come to be alone, and when the child came home, and asked so mournfully for his mother every few min-

utes, I tell you missus, I felt mighty bad too. I tried to comfort 'em, and told 'em how the Lord Jesus knew it all and how we must go to him with all our troubles, and how he liked little children and took 'em in his arms, and they seemed to feel a heap better. My young master was always very kind to me, and when David got over it a little bit, and wanted to marry me, he let us have a little cottage close by where he used to come very often, and that was the trouble, missus, he come too often. He made me presents, that ring *she* carried off, (throwing down her pipe and stamping her foot with great vehemence on the floor) ha, ha, I hope she's run off. He never thought of my runnin' off, but freedom's sweeter 'n any thing else. My husband was sold before one year was out, torn away from his two children, for I had a little baby then, and I never shall forget how he catched it up and kissed it that mornin' 'fore I was up, and said 'good bye Chrissy, I've got to leave you,' and was hurried off without giving me a chance to say a word. Then I took to his oldest child more'n ever. He looked just like his father, and 'peared as if he was almost speakin' to me when I heard him talk, but before I had time to get over it he was sold too. My young master was still good to me and tried to comfort me, saying, my baby never should be sold, for he wouldn't permit it, and the blessed Jesus took it to himself soon after. Though I was all alone then, it was nothin' like its bein' sold, for I knew where it was and it wouldn't suffer no more. Well, one night after my young master had gone away, pretty much as he has now

I was sittin', thinkin' how I'd like to be free, when a sperit seemed to say to me, run. And I says to myself, where shall I run to? and it kept sayin', run. Then I got to thinkin' about my child, how it would be born a slave and might be sold, and I did run that very night; and got away without bein' overtaken. I had money that my master gave me and good clothes so I could pass for a white woman with a veil over my face. I lived at the north ten years, but I never could get over the feelin' generally that I should be took sometime, and it grew upon me. I won't stop to tell you all I suffered from the want of a home and the fear of bein' discovered, but it seemed so good to be free. To prevent the child's bein' took if I was I didn't let folks know she was mine when I went into the city to get work, and when they got me at last I never said a word, but went right off for fear of making a stir that would bring it all out. She was as white as any child and looked some like her father. If I could only know that she was took care of, it wouldn't hurt me so to think of her. When they got me back my young master, that I'd all along kind o' clung to, brought in an old black nigger, that was the ugliest one then on the plantation, and always the one that done the whippin's, and told me I'd got to marry him. If 't had been my old master, nothin' would 'a been too bad for him to do, but that it should 'ave been *him*, and all because I wanted to have his child free, and he knew how I felt about it. Well, that wan't all I suffered, but it was the worst for me to bear. He went north soon after, and I found out

afterwards that he'd been there before, and that was the way he got track of me. He didn't come back again to stay till the winter before he brought you here, and his father was dead then. He never took much notice of me, but I follered him like a ghost. I hadn't any fear of him then, and was so afraid he'd sell my children that every time a stranger was round I listened. Well, one night I listened," then turning to Mrs. Carleton, "be strong honey, and cast all your trouble on the Lord Jesus, that's the way I do, and when I feels very wicked he comes and quiets me and tells me about his crown of thorns, and how he suffered that I might be good, and then I feel's willin' to bear it all, but it will come over me again when I forgets him."

Chrissy here related the substance of the conversation narrated in a previous chapter, and then straightening herself up with an air of triumph, continued, "I kept it all to myself and didn't even let the birds know what I'd heerd, 'cause you know they'll carry things strangely sometimes. When you first came he treated me with his old kindness, and I felt as if I was willin' to forgive him for all he'd done to me ; then he brought that young thing here and told me I wan't needed any more and he was goin' to hire me out. All my blood was in a boil then, and I spoke right out and told him what I'd overheard, but didn't let him know I'd overheard it. Says I 'Massa, you know we was children together, and you treated me like a sister, as I was, and when helpless in your power, I wanted to save your child from bein' the miserable slave that I am, I went off,

you got me back and forced me to live with that brute to raise you slaves for the market, and just as sure as you take me out of this house I'll tell *her*, or somebody that it will get to her, or if you sell either of my children.' The oldest one was sold to help pay the debts after his father died, and I hadn't forgot it. He turned as white as a sheet and I thought he almost trembled, but whether with anger or fear I could not tell. I knew I was havin' my revenge, and I was as firm as a stone. I had no more fear of him than as if he had been my slave, and he knew I had him in my power, unless he took my life. I always knew he was afraid I should tell you about his child, but if he'd treated me well I shouldn't, for I loved him enough never to have run away if it hadn't been for fear of the child bein' sold, and I knew there was no confidence to be put in his word more than any body else, and that it wouldn't be any safer than if it had been David's."

Mrs. Carleton listened to this recital apparently unmoved, but a storm of agitation was raging in her bosom, and before it was finished her resolution was formed which, ere two days passed away, resulted in another exit from the house of Mr. Carleton. A fugitive wife and her two children took a train of cars for the north, and when her husband returned at the end of a week, he found himself minus the brunette, the wife and children, for whom he really had a very strong affection. Chrissy met him in her usual fearless manner secretly exulting in his mortifying predicament, and nothing daunted. The brunette he was obliged to give up as lost property.

Nothing would subject him to the humiliation of raising one inquiry respecting her, and he could easily perceive in the forced gravity of his slaves that they had a ludicrous perception of matters and things as they then stood. Unusually obsequious in all their endeavors to please, many a smile he could detect suddenly vanishing into a most comic, serious expression when he turned quickly towards them.

"Halloo Sambo, how are you?" said he to the coachman, who was shaking his sides as a broad grin displayed his shining ivory to the best advantage, unmindful of his master's presence. "Tol'able thank 'ee sir, tol'able, and hopes massa's right well too," replied he, stepping significantly on the toe of the ostler which was suffering from a corn, causing him to scream, which gave rise to a roar of laughter among the whole gang who had gathered around to welcome their master.

There was a general tumbling and rolling on the grass by the younger members of the group when Mr. Carleton returned to the house.

"Wonder of massa 'll put de bloodhounds on de trail to-night," said one.

"Wonder wheder he'll try to catch missus or de nigger fust," said another, which caused a fresh outburst of laughter, accompanied with the remark,

"Guess if she knew you called her a nigger, she'd be arter ye wid a pitchfork."

"Don't tink massa feel like jumpin' Jim Crow to-night," said a nimble young pure-blooded scion of Ethiop, as he turned somerset and landed on his feet before the words had fairly escaped his lips. Little

did they think while indulging in so much merriment at their master's expense what a cloud was just ready to burst over their heads. The business that had called him to New Orleans was of vital importance to his pecuniary relations, and the result had proved very unsatisfactory. The estate was deeply embarrassed at the time of his father's death, and though a number of the slaves were sold to clear some of the debts, it was by no means in a prosperous condition. His own conduct had contributed not a little to involve it still farther, a conviction of which rendered his reflections that night of a very unpleasant character, aside from the chagrin of being so unceremoniously deserted.

The hundreds of dollars he had spent on the brunette, and other similar transactions, recurred to his mind with great force, and, heartless though it seemed, his recent calculations on the exorbitant price she would bring, if matters came to the worst, were so unexpectedly baffled, he paced the room under the most galling sensations of mingled regret, humiliation, disappointment and despair. He saw no way to escape bankruptcy, and in order to avoid the difficulties that encompassed him like a hedge on every side, he resolved to flee the state. Having no doubt of his wife's destination he intended to follow her.

Fortunately, owing to her father's providential disposition of his property, besides the large portion she brought her husband he bequeathed to her the old family mansion which could not be alienated during her lifetime, and afterwards descended to her

children if she had any. To this place she repaired as her future home, wisely resolving to make the utmost endeavors to leave the past behind her, and, once more surrounded by the friends of her young days, seek to retrieve this fatal step by devoting her life to the relief of the misery existing around her. Little did she know the secret inroads her trials and sufferings had produced upon her physical constitution, or the mental exhaustion which was fast prostrating her whole system. These causes alone were sufficient to change the whole atmosphere of her northern home, and when in addition came the consciousness of the waning affections of those who had gathered around her so adoringly in the happy days of her youth, which even ten years of separation may produce, that frail bark stranded, and she sunk down on her couch never expecting to rise again.

Heroically she struggled with the painfully contending emotions that were fast sapping the vital currents of her life, for the sake of the two beautiful children who seemed to have inherited all the graces and virtues of their mother, and none of their father's vices. At this time the parting words of Mr. Livingston, which fell so ominously on her ears on the day of her marriage, came freshly to mind, and banishing every distrusting thought of his sincerity as unworthy a place in her mind, she resolved at the earliest practicable moment to seek his sympathy and counsel, hoping to find in him a friend and protector for her children, if, as she feared, her own life should not be spared. He lived at some distance

from her and before she succeeded in this arrangement, what were her surprise, indignation and terror at being apprised of Mr. Carleton's arrival at her own door! Strangely enough she had not thought of his following her, although having her fears at times that he would take some measure to rob her of her children. Instead of being paralysed with fear, all the slumbering forces of her soul were instantly roused into action. Instead of the gentle and patient being, who had silently and submissively borne every indignity, he saw before him all the impassioned energy of woman's nature when once provoked to resist her wrongs.

It is but justice to him to say that for a time he was deeply humbled under a heavy feeling of remorse, and his wife's reproaches were borne without making any attempt to reply to them. But this excitement was too much for that delicate frame, already tottering under the weight of intolerable wrongs, and she was again prostrated by another attack of brain fever, when her life was despaired of. He would have been very attentive had not the sight of him made her rave ten-fold worse, and the only way she could be kept quiet at all was to place her children beside her, to whom in her delirium her mind was constantly reverting. If they were not present when she opened her eyes she started up with all the energy of despair to go in search of them. However she rallied from this attack and again gave hopes of recovery.

In the meantime Mr. Carleton recovered from his momentary twinge of conscience, and seeing no

prospect of his own comfortable residence there unless she were out of the way, began to devise measures to rid himself of her. With the aid of a physician bearing the same reputation as himself, and one of his most intimate friends, she was committed for safe keeping, on the plea of insanity, to a lunatic asylum where, to the disgrace of all civilization be it said, any man under the sanction of the same law which entrusted to his sovereign care and protection the tender and helpless being he had chosen for his wife, might consign her with no other evidence than his own biassed testimony and that of his interested friends, whenever, to serve any base purpose of his own, he wished to rid himself of her presence. There none of her friends might be allowed to hold any intercourse with her, and inexorable as fate, the law closed every avenue of defence through which an impartial investigation of facts might produce a reaction in her favor, and she was doomed to suffer day after day, and year after year the most cruel indignities, the most refined torture that a perversion of the family institution into an engine of domestic tyranny could produce.

The holiest institution that God has ordained, one which immediately and remotely effects all the interests of society, it is impossible to trifle with or enter lightly into without incurring the most serious results to ourselves and to the community.

Viewing it in this light and perusing the annals of legislation, no wonder that the soul is sickened by such harrowing details of social life, both public and private, in the pages of history. As domestic virtue

and happiness lie at the foundation of all other virtues and enjoyments, home is the sacred spot that should be the most carefully guarded and protected by all the provisions it is possible for legislation to throw around it, and how has it been ?

The whole history of jurisprudence does not furnish another such a paradox as the assumption that a usurpation of her rights is the highest blessing and the greatest protection that can be accorded to woman by the supreme majesty of the law. Peruse the decisions of eminent lawgivers, and note the universal approbation with which she has been consigned to the most abject despotism under the plea of protection.

A learned judge in New York once said, "That we often see acts of tyranny and cruelty exercised by the husband towards the person of the wife, of which the law takes no cognizance, and yet, no man of wisdom and reflection can doubt the propriety of the rule which gives to the husband the control and custody of the wife." "It is the price which female wants and weakness must pay for their supply and protection." Magnanimous man !

The whole force of public opinion on this subject is founded on a series of contradictions, absurdities and falsehoods, so palpable, that when driven to the strong hold of defence, it cannot show the least vestige of a principle to justify it, and resorts to that most effeminate of all devices, flattery.

It begins by quoting Scripture from Genesis to St. Paul to show that woman through her sinfulness and weakness is the vassal of man, and needs his benefi-

cent control and protection to guide her in the way she should go, and ends by conceding what woman never claimed and St. Paul never asserted, that she is an angel, and must not be permitted to sully her spotless purity, and lesson her divine influence by coming in contact with that demoralizing element which, under the semblance of manhood, defiles every department of public life. And yet it never occurs to our wise legislators that she will be any the less a delicate and refined woman for living in the most intimate relation of life with the most degraded specimen of humanity. All their gallant sympathy and protection explodes, when the angel they worship so far condescends to come down to the plane of mortals as to become a wife.

Admitting that it does not come within the scope of the law to regulate the marriage institution, which is the province of a higher tribunal, the conscience and the affections, it is the true province of legislation to recognize the equal rights of both sexes in entering into the relation, thus removing a great source of selfish motives in the thirst for gain and love of power.

When Mrs. Carleton became aware of her incarceration, having been lured from home under the pretence of a journey for her health, her excitement brought on another attack of fever when it seemed a certainty that her earthly troubles would soon be at an end. But again she rallied, and as soon as consciousness was in any degree restored, thoughts of her children came to nerve her once more to combat with the inroads of disease.

During her convalescence she was entrusted chiefly to the care of a young girl, who was regarded as too stupid to be of any available service to the inmates in any project they might devise to effect their deliverance, being one of those sensitive spirits that could expand only in a congenial atmosphere, and was employed to go of errands, in which capacity she was always so trusty that no very strict watch was kept of her whereabouts so that quite an unlimited freedom was hers. Between her and Mrs. Carleton a reciprocal feeling of attachment sprung up, and many a tedious hour was whiled away in an interchange of affection's offices which were as highly appreciated by one as the other. In this way the days dragged their weary length along, and month after month passed by with no more hope for the future, during which Mrs. Carleton, struggling with her fate as bravely as possible, tried to be calm and quietly await the ordering of events if not so fortunate as to devise any method of escape.

But oh! what a wretched existence was she dragging out! With what yearning tenderness did her mother's soul long to embrace her darlings, who might, perhaps, even now be languishing on beds of pain, moaning for her tender care. But for him who had been the guilty cause of all this woe, she felt only loathing and disgust.

How to escape from her living tomb was her first thought; where to go, and how to get possession of her children was the next; one as hopelessly impossible as the other. In the phrenzy of despair she sometimes gave way to freaks of passion that might

impress strangers who knew nothing of the circumstances with the conviction of her insanity. Wishing to turn this fact to his own advantage Mr. Carleton took with him one day a friend of his to visit her, an unscrupulous lawyer. The sight of her husband and his cruel indifference to her agony at thus being separated from her children stung her to madness. Her eyes flashed, and in no very tender tones she called God to witness that vengeance would one day be visited on his head. The lawyer shook his head with that complacent acquiescence in the wishes of his client so agreeable to his pocket, if not to his conscience.

The thought of appealing to Mr. Livingston again flashed across her mind, but how was a question. Every avenue of communication with her friends was cut off except by letter, and even that must be submitted to the inspection of those who were ignorant of her misfortunes and in sympathy with her husband.

While pondering upon this subject one day, her young attendant, as if divining her thoughts, said with an abruptness and decision that surprised Mrs. Carleton, "If you want to send a letter to any body I will put it in the Post Office."

Looking at her with doubt and astonishment she replied, "They would not allow you to do that."

The little wise-acre with the most innocent simplicity remarked with a knowing smile, "I go just where I please."

Mrs. Carleton hesitated a moment about the propriety of sending her on an errand so utterly at variance with the established rules, but as it involved

no deception, the girl neither being forbidden to go, nor likely to be questioned on her return, she quickly decided in the affirmative.

She wrote a letter to Mr. Livingston, reminding him of his proffered friendship, and imploring him to come to her assistance, or obtain her release in some way. She told him frankly how she had suffered and what insults and outrages had been heaped upon her, facts of which he needed no farther proof than his own observation could vouch for. She gave him directions about her address, naming the day when she would send for it at the office. In her desperation she assumed that something must be done in which no alternative was presented.

It was very trying to him to be obliged to crush the faintest vestige of a hope of procuring her release, or of gaining access to her children. He told her of all the exertions that had been made, and the deep interest excited in her behalf, closing with the proffer of his services in any way that could be of advantage, and assuring her of his undiminished regard and deepest sympathy.

It was such a consolation to receive a friendly message and sympathizing words from any one, that she almost overlooked the substance of the letter saying nothing could be done, remembering only the offer of assistance to which she clung as a certain omen that something remained, and to discover what this might be, knowing it to be dependent on herself, she bent all the energies of her mind, but with little success.

"What, shall I give it up so," she said, "drag my

life out here when my children have such a claim upon me, because he whom the world recognizes as my husband has unlimited power and may violate the obligation resting as strongly upon him as me, because he is a man, and I a woman ? No ! By all these powers God has given me as a wife and mother I will get away from here to proclaim to the world the iniquity of its laws and the baseness of mankind, though my life be the forfeit."

She scanned the distance from her window to the ground, her room being fortunately in the second story, and formed her determination.

" If any human being is willing to assist me," she thought, " I should detest myself if I could not devise some way to raise myself above this degradation. I would jump from this window if only sure of escape afterwards. Let me think. If I should write to him to be here with his carriage and the fleetest horses he could procure, at such time of day as the house is most quiet, would there not be a possibility of getting beyond the reach of pursuit before they would get started ? " It was a desperate venture, but she was desperate. Closely watched it required the greatest precaution to manage the affair without exciting suspicion that something was on foot, as well as in writing her letters. If Mr. Livingston should consent to her proposal which might well be doubted, not knowing what rash plan she had formed, of which she had not dared to give him the least intimation because it was rash, how could she be sure of any time when no one would be on the premises to stand in the way of her flight. Her anxiety during that

short period was equalled only by her previous suffering. If this plan failed no other avenue of escape presented itself to her burning brain. Through weary years, perhaps, her miserable existence might be protracted, though it seemed scarcely possible. That rich auburn hair was already streaked with gray, and that fair, smooth skin so withered and wrinkled with the agony of torturing days and sleepless nights that one would scarcely recognize the wreck of what was once so beautiful and lovely. Thoughts of her children made her cling to life with about equal desperation, and for them she wrestled with many a temptation to crave for herself the blessed boon of lying down in her last sleep.

Her experience was not without its salutary lessons. While at the south her own troubles had somewhat blinded her to the sufferings of others notwithstanding her generous nature, and the enormities of the slave system never impressed her with such vividness as now, when she could realize the glorious blessing of liberty, and the utter heartlessness of any system that separates parent and child.

"How can such wickedness be tolerated," said she to herself, and then quickly recurring to her own case she marvelled all the more, "how is it that I, here in the land of my birth, surrounded by friends who have known me from childhood up, and once the favorite of every circle, am left to pine here in this living tomb? Why don't they come and batter down these doors? How *can* they go about their business with such cruel indifference when they know what a fellow-being is suffering, and a woman

too? *Know?* How *can* they know when they never experienced it? Down with all your pretended tenderness for woman's feelings! It is all hypocrisy.

"Mothers, sitting by your own happy firesides, how *can* you be so quiet when others are suffering so much, and denied the privilege of sitting by their firesides? Yet have I not done it? We never feel another's woe until it becomes our own. Is it possible if I should get away from this place I should ever sit quietly down forgetting the misery around me? Get away from here! What if I never should! Oh God, art thou just?"

As she thought of the doubtful chances of her escape after the letter was sent, and nothing remained to be done but to await the result, her shattered nerves gave rise to the most torturing apprehensions concerning her future safety, and the troubles she might bring upon others in pursuing this course. A deadly hate towards Mr. Livingston had always existed in the breast of Mr. Carleton, and she did not know what injury his anger might prompt him to commit if he should be the instrumentality of effecting her deliverance.

The dangerousfeat from the chamber window was another source of the most agonizing solicitude lest her courage should fail if the carriage did come. Every night her restless slumber was disturbed with visions of perilous adventure and hair breadth escapes. But all this anxiety was swallowed up in the overwhelming suspense lest the letter should not meet a favorable reception. Perhaps she would never hear any more from it. At this suggestion fear and

weakness fled, and no attempt, promising the least hope of success, was too hazardous for her to make.

There was one who could not sit quietly by her own fireside when another was suffering so intensely. This was Mrs. Livingston. All her mother's soul was stirred, and she would have shrunk from nothing which promised the least ray of hope, let the risk of danger be what it might. Timidity was not one of her faults.

On the receipt of this letter from Mrs. Carleton, Mr. Livingston naturally hesitated about the wisdom of acting according to her suggestion. That flight was her intention could not be doubted, although in what manner remained to be seen.

The extreme hazard of the attempt presented itself in every form to his better judgment, and discretion prompted him to second no step that might result in the most serious consequences to herself as well as others. His wife was not to be so summarily disposed of. Her temperament was of that ardent, impulsive character which inspires courage and energy into an enterprise that requires perseverance rather than forethought, though not always the one to depend on in an emergency, or to solve the way out of a difficulty. Excess of feeling is not balanced by sufficient caution to avoid perplexities a little discretion might easily foresee. Warm-hearted and generous, justice does not always go before generosity, nor prudence act with sufficient firmness and moderation. Mrs. Livingston, however, united with her bounding impulse sufficient consideration and firmness to guide it. She never acted rashly or blindly.

Her decision was promptly rendered that it was best to go with the carriage and horses, and trust to Mrs. Carleton for the rest. No alternative was presented to her mind.

"Do you think," said she, "that if I were in her place, separated from *my* children, I should consider any proffers of friendship or expressions of sympathy as coming from sincere motives which would not prompt so much of an effort as that for me? I would move heaven and earth to the rescue if possible. I will go, and it seems to me more advisable for Walter to go with me than for you, Ernest."

Mr. Livingston yielded, and Walter raised no objection to the arrangement. He had exhausted his fund of legal knowledge in the vain hope of detecting some leop-hole through which the innocent might be rescued and the guilty meet his deserts; but though in the liberal construction of the law every other prisoner might be entitled to an impartial hearing, woman, in her married state, was such a nonentity that this privilege could not be accorded to her, and he felt the force and justice of Rosalind's appeal.

They started on the appointed day, which was very warm and sultry, and fortunately encountered no one on their approach to the scene of adventure. The avenue being a winding one, the carriage would not come in sight until very near the entrance to the house, and by walking the horses so little noise was made that no attention was attracted to the spot from the inmates.

The disagreeable sensations agitating Mrs. Carle-

ton as the hour drew near cannot easily be imagined. Unable to obtain any sleep the night before, her nervous system was stretched to its utmost tension, and the frightful leap from the window tormented her with the most fearful apprehensions lest courage should fail at last. As her chamber fronted the main avenue leading to the building, no carriage could escape her observation, but it was possible for some other to come ; and it might be unsafe to rely on her indistinct vision, now so impaired by sickness and suffering, to guide her accurately. Many such fears arose, all of which fled when the hand pointed to the hour and no carriage appeared.. Not a person was stirring outside the building and every thing was propitious as could be for the adventure. No shrinking now from the hazardous leap—she was not afraid to jump on the soft greensward below, or perform any other similar feat, with the prospect of escape afterwards. Could it be possible he would disappoint her ? How every moment swelled into an hour !

\* \* \* \* \*

There comes the carriage and no mistaking the driver, Walter Claremont, whose frank, manly face and large brown eyes it was easy to recognize. A moment more and she was on the ground. The leap was effected with less of harm than she expected, laming her considerably, but not enough to disable her from rising. She reached the carriage by the time it stopped and Walter lifted her in. Exhausted nature then gave way and she fell into a swoon. Mrs. Claremont's forethought fortunately provided for this emergency in supplying Rosalind with cordials,

which she applied as well as the circumstances would allow—if not sufficient to restore consciousness, the little strength remaining was thereby enabled to sustain her until the end of the journey. Not a moment was to be lost and fleetly sped the horses. That the hour should have been chosen when no one was stirring on the grounds, seemed almost an interposition of providential guidance as such an opportunity was seldom presented. The carriage was seen by some of the inmates but Mrs. Carleton was not, and making no stop, it was supposed motives of curiosity brought the travelers there to see the building. As no one had occasion to go to her room until tea time two or three hours after, she was many miles beyond their reach when her absence was discovered by the functionaries in charge.

It so happened that the attendants were unusually engaged that afternoon in preparing for a little entertainment to be held in the evening for the diversion of such of the inmates as were considered in a proper state to participate in it, but Mrs. Carleton knew nothing of it when she wrote her letter, being afterwards informed by her young attendant, whom she encouraged to assist in the preparations thus ensuring her absence; and as she was seldom visited by any one else, she might feel quite sure of being left alone.

## **CHAPTER XXX**

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"And I said then I should shrink from what bears such bitter fruit"  
I will speak a few words now through my heart, be as it may."

No little commotion was excited when it was discovered that Mrs. Carleton had escaped from her prison. By what means she had effected the escape was a mystery. Every one was ignorant of any circumstances connected with the affair that could afford the least clue to its solution. Even the little wife were when questioned answered with her usual indifference, manifesting no interest to obtain any knowledge of her, which rather surprised the other attendants who had observed the apparent attachment between them. She had her conjectures from remarks Mrs. Carleton made that morning coupled with expressions of gratitude for all her kindness to her, which, however, would have left no particular impression if she had not disappeared, but how the flight was accomplished she was equally puzzled to guess. Suspicions finally rested on the carriage as having some connection with the mystery, and Mr. Carleton, upon receiving the information, at once suspected Mr. Livingston, though unable to comprehend by what possible means any communication could have been effected between him and his wife.

It was sometime before he gained any certain tidings of her as the affair was kept very secret, none outside the family circle knowing of her presence at Orange Grove. She was still unconscious when she arrived there, but by the aid of powerful restoratives, life, accompanied by a high fever, returned to contend once more for the mastery with death. When the fever abated the attending physician gave very little encouragement that reason would ever resume its sway if her life was spared. Mrs. Claremont and Milly were the only ones it was safe to admit to her bedside. The sight of Mr. Livingston and his wife excited her to such a degree that it was impossible to hold her in bed. "Has he come," she would say, "is he here? You will not let him take me will you? Oh my poor children! I must not stay here, I must get away."

Mrs. Claremont's soothing words and assurance of safety as with gentle force she remanded her to her bed, promising to guard her against every harm, generally calmed the invalid, whose strength could sustain her no longer in that state of excitement. As days wore on she became more quiet, but gave very little evidence of returning strength. Upon her will, in a great measure, depended her recovery. Whether consciousness would be restored sufficiently to make her understand this was very doubtful. With the first gleam of reason came the maddening recollection of her stinging wrongs, and her brain reeled again in that unconscious state which comes of despair.

Mr. Carleton once made his appearance there with

an officer, thinking he might intimidate the family to give her up, but Rosalind proved more than a match for him.

"Do you come here," said she, "expecting us to deliver her into your custody, because you claim the power the law gives you as her husband, when you have treated her worse than a brute? No! Sooner would I trample on every law in the state than be guilty of such perfidy!"

One morning, when unusually rational, Mrs. Claremont removed her patient in front of the window which commanded a full view of the lawn, whose verdant beauty was resplendent with sparkling gems fresh from the hand of its Maker, as the sun suddenly emerged from his misty shadow.

Mrs. Carleton gazed at it long and quietly as if lost in reverie. Mrs. Claremont approached to speak to her, but was anticipated by the sufferer with the remark, "What a lovely morning!" Her manner indicating that something farther was seeking utterance, Mrs. Claremont proceeded with the task of arranging her hair without making any reply.

She continued, "As the earth smiles so lovingly from its lap of tender green after the gathering shades of darkness have merged in the tranquil morning light, so does my soul respond to the giver of all blessings for his kindness and watchfulness over me."

"There are many blessings in store for you yet, I firmly believe," replied her faithful friend and nurse. "You remember the promise of old, 'All things work together for good to those who love God.' "

"I am afraid that I have not loved him as much as I ought. I should have been more willing to trust Him when my troubles rose in such magnitude around me. Much as I wish to see my children, I feel now a resignation to wait His time, and a cheerful willingness to submit all my wrongs to that impartial tribunal which alone is able to award a righteous verdict. Why should we, weak mortals, presume to invoke vengeance on an erring fellow mortal ? "

A perceptible change for the better was soon to be observed in the invalid, and her recovery was very rapid. Meanwhile, owing to the indefatigable exertions of Mrs. Livingston, efforts were being made for the restoration of her children. A great deal of sympathy was awakened in all circles by the story of her sufferings, her marvellous escape, and the forgiving spirit she now manifested. Men in the legal profession whose consciences were not so seared as to prevent them from discerning a moral principle behind the law, were eager to discover some process through which they could effect the desired object. It was done although we can scarcely tell how. The law is a tricky old tyrant, and the man who is ingenious enough to understand all its crooks and turns wields a powerful sceptre either for good or evil. By the rendering of a single phrase fortunes have been gained and lost, life made the sport of chance and the destinies of nations materially changed for centuries to come. By a liberal construction on the side of justice, reforms have been peacefully carried

through constitutional measures, which otherwise would have triumphed only through fire and blood.

Probably no calling has been more maligned than the legal profession. Entrusted with responsibilities extending alike to the proudest ruler and the humblest citizen, covering with its broad mantle all the vital interests of society by its culmination in the supposed wisdom and integrity of the judicial ermine, before whose decisions both church and state bow in reverent homage, there is none which calls for a higher exercise of all those pre-eminent virtues which constitute the true Christian, patriot and statesman. On the other side, through its monopoly of the knowledge of the technicalities of the law, about which the mass of the people take no trouble to inform themselves, there is no profession in which an unscrupulous man can so openly and respectably trifle with the most momentous interests of the human family, individually or collectively, as in the practice of law. Society is not guiltless so long as it delegates irresponsible powers to any class of men inheriting the common passions and vices of mankind, and such powers are delegated whenever, blind to its own interests, or forgetful of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, it permits human laws to override the divine.

Walter Claremont was too honest to take advantage of any ambiguous phrase where the intentional meaning was not to be denied, but his influence in presenting the moral bearings of the case contributed materially towards gaining a decision in favor of Mrs. Carleton.

She saw him once at her own request, but not to taunt him with reproaches. She told him that although he had forfeited all reverence as a husband she wished him no ill, and while she should not seek to lessen her children's respect for him as their father, she could not teach them to cherish his memory by perpetuating his name as a household word, which would henceforth never escape her lips either in their presence or in the presence of others.

Had he not lost every spark of manhood, which in his younger days was at times sufficient to overpower his sensuality with something like the pure gush of feeling, he would have shown some emotion, but he was as unmoved as a statue. Even the affection he had once manifested for his children seemed to have died out of his bosom.

He departed to seek a more congenial home at the south, the more willingly that a prospect opened before him to retrieve his fallen fortunes, having quite a stock in trade in the way of information concerning several fugitives from different parts of the south, whose former masters he had known, which he kept properly booked. This proved a most invaluable acquisition to his credentials for admission again to southern society, a path that might have been rather difficult of access after his precipitate retreat.

The old slave law of '93, though sufficiently stringent in its provisions, had never been very effectual in securing the end for which it was enacted, owing to the prejudices still lingering in the northern mind against the anti-republican theory that only white men were created free and equal. The southern

lords of the lash began to sit uneasily in their chairs, and their timid accomplices at the north, the law and order men were laboring with untiring zeal to convince them of their own readiness to act at their bidding, the sincerity of which was proved when they were called upon to "conquer their prejudices."

As the contest went on the little remnant of northern conscience which had hitherto endorsed in theory, if not in practice, the doctrine that every man had an inalienable right to liberty was ready to pronounce it a "glittering generality," and the teachings of Christ were reversed,—"I was a stranger and ye took me not in" being made the test of national christianity. In the reverent stillness of a New England Sabbath the church bells sounded their call to morning prayer; from choir and organ rose the swelling anthems of praise, but only to the white man's God. The black was that day struck out of existence. Only in secluded alleys and darkened cellars, in the crowded attic where his living flesh could be stowed away so that it might be overlooked among the enormous piles of other "merchandise," could his soul pour itself to God in prayer.

Then was the hour of triumph for such as Mr. Carleton. On the scent of their human prey they skulked abroad under the ensign of the American Eagle, to proclaim the infatuated lie that "black men had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." But over these scenes humanity would willingly draw a veil.

## **CHAPTER XXXVIII.**

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*"In our spirits doth His spirit shine,  
As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew."*

"What a magic power is a kind word ! And when it is not the mere impulse of the moment, but the perpetual atmosphere of home, how softly go the hours ! Hearts grow young and cares press lightly, pain loses half its sting and affliction half its sorrow. Were this truth more fully realized how much of this world's misery might we escape, how much of bitter self-accusations and life-long regrets." Such was Milly's soliloquy one afternoon, as she sat musing upon the wonderful transformation that might be effected in this world of disappointment, if the affections were more tenderly cultivated. This was a theme upon which she had been dreaming all her life, and the desire to effect something towards this transformation had prompted her to write the novel, which, however, was not likely to accomplish much so long as it was carefully concealed in her drawer.

Reader, did you ever try to amuse your leisure moments of thought by picturing to yourself the real life of the unmarried woman ? Well, whatever your speculations may have been you may rest pretty sure that they are a failure. She might just as well attempt to appropriate to her own experience the hidden sanctities, honored or profaned, that lie within

the charmed circle of conjugal love. Can she sympathize with you either in joy or sorrow, when with a mother's gushing tenderness you clasp in your arms the idolized child, which in a few short months is hidden from your gaze forever? Certainly not. She may portray your feelings more vividly than you could yourself, but the realization is not there. You in your innocent simplicity may look upon her occasionally, perhaps with sympathy if realizing your anticipations of wedded bliss, because she cannot share your joys, or it may be that burdened with care and wearied with watching you almost envy her her freedom from the responsibilities resting upon you. Farther than this you seldom go, having neither the time nor the inclination to enter her secret sanctuary and participate in her joys and sorrows; and perhaps if you did you would not be admitted. She has more time for reflection than you, and knows how insignificant they will seem to you. You readily understand that marriage is the natural relation of every man and woman without which neither can be fully developed, but did it ever occur to you what an anomalous life that must be, in a state of society which carries this principle so far as to consider it the only sphere for woman's development, when all those faculties and affections that naturally centre in a family must be diverted into some other channel. If established in business that gives sufficient range to all her powers, or fortunately so constituted as to find the greatest happiness in ministering unto others, she may prove an exception, yet even then her life is distinct from yours.

When you see a quiet person like Milly making so little stir that you almost forget her existence, do not for a moment imagine she is the unobserving person you might judge her to be, or that her life flows so smoothly on she has no care or anxiety to disturb her. Those instincts and affections implanted for the fulfilment of the high trusts imposed on the family relation are by no means stifled in her bosom, and upon her success in guiding these through normal channels to other objects and interests, in a great measure depends her happiness.

On the same day an animated discussion was held in another room among the other members of the family, of which Milly was the unconscious subject.

That year had witnessed one of those financial crises that occasionally sweep over the land like a tornado, wrecking the millionaire of yesterday and carrying dismay and starvation into thousands of hamlets but lately the abodes of happiness and comfort, as the laborers are thus thrown out of employment and their little all swallowed up in the general crash. The sad spectacles constantly presented of large families dependent on their daily toil for support, with no prospect before them but beggary or vice to meet the rigors of the coming winter, aroused Amelia Crawford, whose whole life was now devoted to the work of reclaiming the intemperate and vicious, to make some organized effort towards alleviating their distress.

For this purpose she appealed to a number of individuals noted for their beneficence, whose fortunes escaped unharmed, among whom was Mr. Livingston.

Her proposition was, if the means could be raised, to found a home for the destitute, and furnish employment both for them and others, who with a little help could provide one for themselves. Amelia was one of those practical, persevering spirits who never put hand to the plough and look back, and consequently she never failed in any undertaking, which fact inspired confidence in those whom she consulted, that they might safely rely on her success in any achievement of this kind.

Not every one she consulted, however, had the means at his command to effect so much towards the consummation of the desired object as Mr. Livingston, of which circumstance he was fully aware. First, he had a powerful helpmeet in his wife, who was always equal to any emergency pressed upon her ; next came her mother, whose long life of disinterested efforts in benevolent channels gave her a wide spread influence she could wield to great advantage in furthering this enterprise ; and then he knew of another whose highest happiness it would be to witness its accomplishment, Mrs. Carleton, over whose placid features the benign radiance of a peace which comes not of this world shed a diviner beauty ; and last though not least, came Milly, whose meek, quiet offices in ministering to a family of unfortunate ones, he could foresee would invest her with a sort of unconscious dignity that would develop the latent powers of her soul. With an artist's quick perception he had often, when observing her, taken in the whole range of what her thoughts, feelings and aspirations might be, just as, when solving a diffi-

cult mathematical problem, a knowledge of the general rules leading to its solution, enables us to calculate about what process it will be necessary to go through. There were also strong points of resemblance in their mental organizations, which would enable him to understand her more readily than his practical, business-like wife, full of demonstration and enthusiasm, could possibly do. When he laid Amelia's suggestion before the latter, which met her cordial approbation, she immediately consulted Mrs. Carleton, who warmly espoused it though it was little she could contribute besides her influence, being broken down in health, and having no pecuniary means to resort to. Rosalind, whose fertile brain never lacked expedients to effect any end she desired, made a proposition to her that if she felt willing to give the use of the old family mansion, which was very large and commodious for such a purpose, they would most cheerfully provide her a home in their family, a point that had already been discussed with her husband and Mrs. Claremont. This proposition was very cheerfully accepted, not only for the benefits thus resulting to others, but also to herself in dwelling among such genial influences as were embowered within the sylvan retreats of Orange Grove. By the addition of a single room in a retired part of the house which rather added to the completeness of the whole, and therefore had long been desired by Rosalind, Mrs. Carleton could be furnished with apartments for herself and children entirely distinct from theirs, and without any inconvenience to themselves.

The selection of a suitable person to take charge of this heterogenous assemblage, whose mental and moral natures were to be provided for as well as their physical wants, was found the most perplexing part of the work, being the subject in debate upon the afternoon alluded to, when Mr. Livingston proposed Milly as one possessing the necessary qualifications, greatly to the amazement of his matter-of-fact wife, who would never have perceived anything practical in such a dreamy, poetic nature as hers.

"Oh, Ernest!" she exclaimed, "you cannot be in earnest. She is not adapted to the responsibility of such a position, and I don't believe she would accept it if offered to her, being entirely unaccustomed to anything of the sort. She may have capacity enough, but it must be developed in the right way to be available. A person must do something besides theorize. She is amiable, affectionate, and would make a model wife for somebody."

"It seems, then, I made a serious mistake when I was married. I began to think so the month previous, when you were so much more ready to attend to everybody else than to me, and doubted seriously if my turn would ever come at all, and whether such a business-like wife was just the one to love me."

"Oh, now, you needn't put on such a doleful air, when I know you were congratulating yourself all the time upon your good fortune in getting such a wife. Haven't I been devoted enough to you since, to make it all up?" said she, fondly stooping over his shoulder, where she had been standing, twining one of his shining locks around her finger. "But

really this is a serious question about Milly, in which we ought to put aside every personal consideration."

"Certainly we must, and I am serious too. Well now, my sweet Rose, I have yielded to you hitherto, even when my own sense of discretion would have prompted me to do otherwise, because I had confidence in your judgment, and will you not for once trust me in mine?"

"To be sure I will, but don't imagine that I suppose you are so yielding as to give up to me unless I am able to convince you of the plausibility, at least, of my undertaking. Mother, what do you say? You ought to know Milly quite as well as I do."

"She is not one I should have thought of proposing for the place, but I am not ready to deny the possibility of your husband's prediction. If she feels herself competent for the task, and desirous to go, I should have no fear. These artists are more accurate judges of the real qualities of the soul than such prosaic beings as you and I. I could mention many among my acquaintance who thought Ernest Livingston as wild in his selection of a wife as you now think him to be, but I rather think he is fully satisfied that he did not refer the question to their judgment, or even judge you by appearances."

With a merry laugh Mr. Livingston then rose, and after hastily pressing his blushing wife to his bosom, threaded his way to Lilly's garden, whither he had just caught a glimpse of Milly passing, that being a chosen retreat of hers, and also her special charge now. Flowers bloomed there through all the blossoming season in greater beauty than in any other

part of the garden, as they received the greatest share of attention, and were also associated with the lovely spirit whose unseen presence consecrated them to an eternal beauty. This was a place seldom frequented by Ernest in the glare of open day,—he liked better the calm, still hour of twilight, to hold converse with those scenes which even now seemed to inspire his highest day dreams with something like the prophetic visions of old, when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead them. In his mind's eye he realized somewhat of this ideal in the beneficent results of the institution to establish which they were all devoting their energies, and Milly seemed to him just the one to lead in the work.

She was a little surprised at being accosted by him in that spot, where she had never met him before. After a few casual remarks he introduced the subject, at the mention of which her face kindled with a glow of enthusiasm, and he saw at once that she comprehended more than the mere outer details. At another time she might have shrunk from the thought of being herself installed in a station of so much importance, through fear of her incapacity to meet its responsibilities, but now her soul responded with a grateful amen for the opening of the prison door, as with a prophet's glance her intuitive perceptions foreshadowed realities sublimer than any sketch of tongue or pen.

Without any hesitation she agreed to accept the position he offered, if such a course should meet the approbation of all parties concerned, which condition

he knew was settled beyond a doubt, as a majority of those who had contributed most liberally to the funds were glad enough to be relieved of the labor and care of inaugurating the work, to yield readily to any plan proposed by those who were willing to bear its burdens. So after the necessary preliminary arrangements, including a proper degree of patience with the cavilling of those who had little else to offer by way of assistance, the following Christmas witnessed the dedication of the old, stately mansion of Christopher Blanche, once the envied abode of wealth, luxury and ease, to the service of the most unfortunate of the other extreme of society.

This was a delightful scene to Mrs. Carleton, and one which atoned for the years of bitter suffering she had experienced. The rather dilapidated state into which the grounds had fallen for want of an owner's interest in them during the last few years, suggested to her the passage of scripture, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose," which was literally illustrated as spring advanced, and a general air of thrift succeeded the former neglected appearance. The magnificent lawns began to assume their former tasteful simplicity, the hedge-rows were neatly put in trim, the climbing vines, clematis and honeysuckle, carefully trained around the pillars of the garden porch, as in days of old they were wont to grow under the supervision of the same watchful care which was now superintending all these improvements, the old gardener.

He had lost all the careful savings of many years

through the failure of a reputed wealthy firm in the city, and found himself at threescore without a penny in the world, having a feeble wife and several young children dependent upon him. He was accordingly employed to take general charge of the premises on which was located a little cottage, his former residence when in that service before, and in which he and his family were again reinstated.

The change inside was no less marked and pleasing to the observer. Old age and childhood met there and blessed each other ; the most restless and turbulent spirits were soothed, and became contented and happy under Milly's genial influence. The most perplexing case she had to deal with was that of a bright little boy, of ten years, whom Amelia had found in the street, without home or friends, and getting a lodging wherever he could, but oftener under no roof at all. His unusual intelligence made him a great proficient in all the vile habits engendered by a too familiar intercourse with street influences, and few could exceed him in lying and profanity. He was also a confirmed smoker, sporting his cigar, when he could get one, with as much pomposity as any young dandy who considers this one of the first accomplishments of the gentleman.

By a little cajoling he could always get a pipe from some of the old people, with whose confirmed habits she knew it would be of little use to interfere, but she would not tolerate the practice among the young, deeming this the only effectual field in which to labor for its suppression. Besides being conscientiously opposed to the use of tobacco in all its

forms, the pure instincts of her soul repelled the sickly, sentimental taste, that puts aside womanly delicacy to profess admiration for the curling smoke, which only suggested to her a mist in the smoker's brain like that in the atmosphere he so persistently pollutes.

The juvenile offender at length had the satisfaction of being domiciled in a pleasant little apartment in a retired section of the house until he was cured. At first he was going to be very brave, and stay there just as long as Miss Milly wished, determined not to show any sign of penitence; but before the first day was out he found it decidedly tedious not to be his own master, and run about as he had done. In vain he framed every excuse to get out, and plead with Milly, but she was inexorable. Always pleasant and kind, she bore patiently his childish threats, sometimes taking him with her to walk, that he might have the benefit of air and exercise, but never permitting him to go alone. Sometimes he feigned sickness, which however did not move her at all; neither was she alarmed when he was really sick, and lost his appetite in consequence of being wholly deprived of his accustomed stimulus. She nursed him faithfully, and provided delicacies that won his childish gratitude when he had no relish for them. As he recovered, a sincere reformation took place, and he became one of the most obedient and affectionate of children.

Milly soon after found her counterpart in a little orphan girl, brought there by the watchman according to the instructions of Mrs. Livingston, who had

not forgotten the unfortunate fate of Chrissy's daughter. She had lived in seven different families, from the last of which she ran away, because she thirsted for words of kindness which she did not receive there. The fear of discovery deterred her from giving any other account of herself than that her name was Alice; and her unusual thoughtfulness and great desire to make herself useful, forbade any pressing inquiries, it being evident enough that if she had been treated kindly, no blame would have rested on her. She became warmly attached to Milly, and caressing her one day, said with touching tenderness, "Miss Milly, why won't you let me call you mother, I do so want a mother." It was impossible for that loving soul to deny such a request to this lonely one, and she adopted her under the name of Alice Dayton, and richly was she repaid by her affectionate devotion. Life was now opening before her with a rich harvest. In the most depraved and degraded she found the germ of some noble purpose, which needed only the right kind of influence to nourish and perfect it; in the most humble and unpretending, rare gems of thought and modest worth, which, as if by intuition, she grasped and unfolded.

The dumb prophet had found a voice at last; a voice which has many times been echoed through the land during the stirring events of the last few years, as woman has in thousands of instances come up from the painful inactivity of home into a sphere of happiness and usefulness, where by ministering unto others in camp and hospital, hovel and prison, she has found in each deed of blessing a triple benediction for herself.







